# TWENTY DECADES

IN

# PLYMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE

1763 - 1963

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REYNOLDS HISTORICAL
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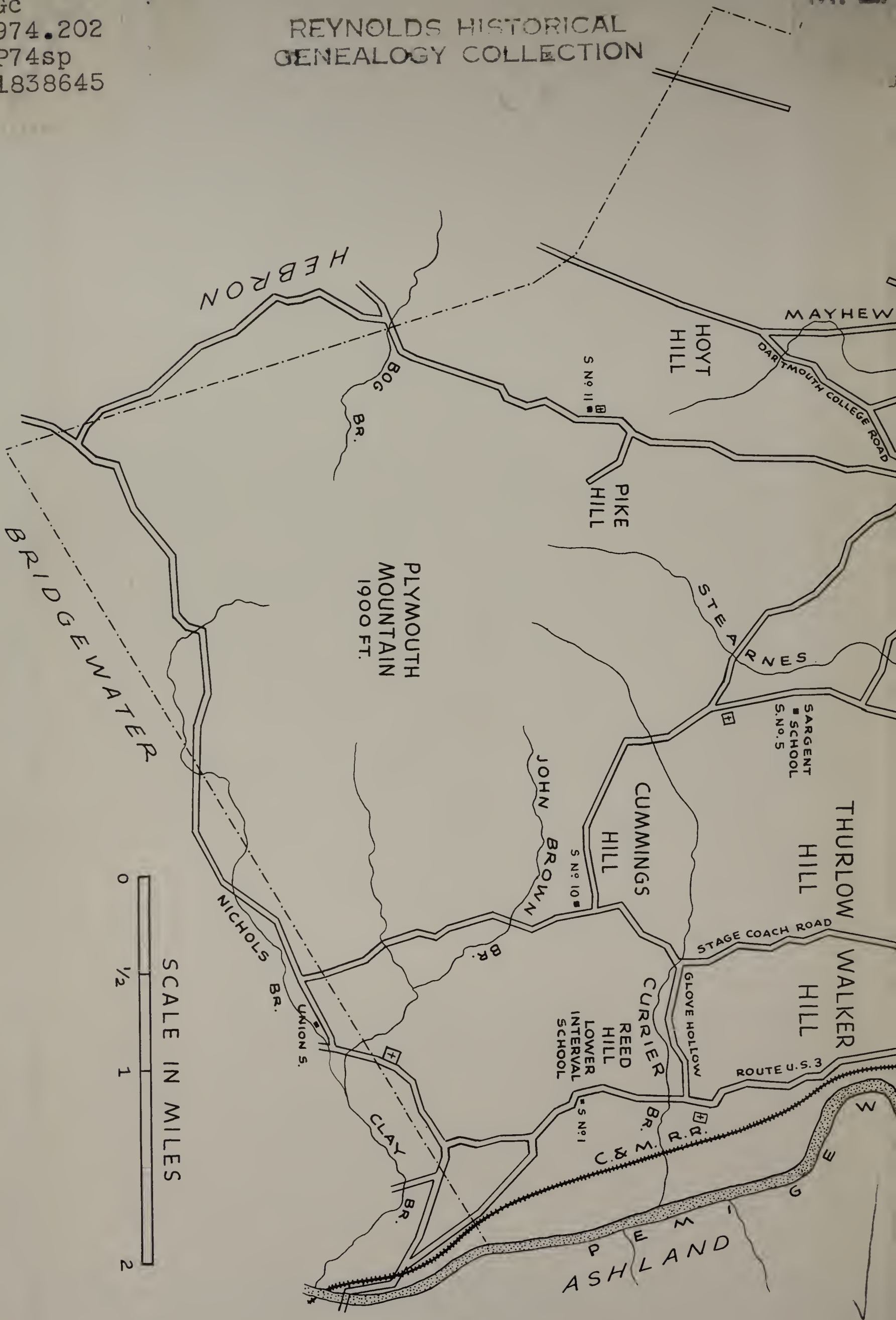

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# PLYMOUTH N.H.

1905

N
W
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LOON POND
RUMNEY
POND BR.
POTASH PIT
S № 12
C. & M. R.R.
CALVIN CLARK BR.
BEECH HILL BR.
CAMPTON
LIVERMORE FALLS
FAIRGROUNDS
WADING POOL
BAKER
ROUTE U.S. 3
LIVERMORE SCHOOL
P.V.R.R.
POTASH PIT
N.H. 25
ADAMS BR.
S № 3
CLARK BR.
BAKER RIVER SCHOOL
COOS ROAD (ROUTE 25)
RIVER
S № 9
HOLDERNESS
WEST PLYMOUTH
U.S. 3A TURNPIKE
1ST M.E. CH.
HUCKINS HILL
RESERVOIRS
2ND C.CH.
WARD'S HILL SCHOOL
HIGH SCHOOL
S № 6
1ST C.CH
DARTMOUTH COLLEGE ROAD
3RD C.H.
PEABODY BR.
TURNPIKE

—Aria C. Roberts

## ELLEN AMELIA WEBSTER

On her ninety-ninth birthday, Sept. 25, 1962.

Miss Webster is the great-granddaughter of David Webster, the first settler in Plymouth. She was born in Bridgewater, the daughter of David Moor Webster. She attended school in the small, brick schoolhouse on the River Road and at Abbot Academy in Andover, Massachusetts. She conducted a private school in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Now, in retirement at her birthplace, she enjoys reading, knitting, cultivating her houseplants, chatting with friends and her parakeet and pet cat, Smokey.

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## 1763 - 1963

*By Eva A. Speare*

Eva A. Speare
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# INTRODUCTION

"The Future Is the Past."

The above maxim is axiomatic in its application to the commemoration of the two hundredth birthday of the Town of Plymouth. Every decade since July 15, 1763 has promoted the future.

Although time does not permit the preparation of a documented history, this two hundredth milestone requires a review of the elements that have distinguished the town.

Accordingly, the Bicentennial Commission has published a narrative of the principal events in each of the twenty decades. How the founders determined the ethical, moral and law-abiding principles of town government. How the early settlers utilized the local resources: water power, forests and clay deposits. How transportation encouraged trade and native genius discovered new processes that introduced manufacturing. How the early necessity for higher education resulted in the present honorable status of the town. These are described from decade to decade, the facts derived from records of residents no longer among us.

To the integrity, patriotism and industry of the founders and their descendants, Plymouth owes its growth. To its geographical situation, Plymouth is indebted, in part, for its present advancement. To its professional and commercial leaders, Plymouth assigns its widespread reputation.

The story about these achievements is gradually revealed within this small volume, written especially for children, yet of historical significance for adults.

May future decades enjoy an increasing prosperity that evolves from the past two hundred years.

EVA A. SPEARE

—G. G. Clark

MEETINGHOUSE IN HOLLIS, 1746

Here the Town of Plymouth and the church were organized on April 16, 1764. Selectmen, a clerk, and tax collectors were elected. Rev. Nathan Ward was chosen as the minister of the town.

Notice the horse block at the left, used by a woman to mount to the saddle. If alone, she hooked her knee around the pommel of her side-saddle, or sat on a pillion behind another rider.

# 1763-1773

To visualize the landscape of Plymouth about 200 years ago requires a creative mind. Where cleared fields, paved streets and modern structures now are seen, then dense forests and glacial boulders covered the soil. Beneath the oaks, elms and evergreens roamed packs of wolves, also bear, moose and deer, lynx and wildcats, with otter and beaver near the streams. Coiled among the undergrowth were reptiles including rattlesnakes.

Fortunately, here was well watered territory. Springs were the sources of a dozen streams that flowed into the Pemigewasset and Baker Rivers, that converged where mile-wide grassy meadows formed treeless flood plains. The soil was the deep accumulation of leafmold, rich in humus. After 200 years, the judgment of those men who selected this grant has proved to have been well-grounded.

## THE ABANAKI INDIANS

This valley possessed historical traditions. Proved by the research of scholars in Canadian Universities, around 2000 years ago the Abanaki Indians were invading New Hampshire from the north. They named one river Pemigewasset in honor of their successful leader against the Iroquois invaders from the Mohawk Valley. The other was Asquamchumauke River. Asquam means a quantity of water whether stream or lake; chu, crooked; auke, a high place: a large, crooked stream from the hills.

At the confluence of these rivers, a village grew beside a trail along the banks. Here was a stopping place between Canada and the seacoast. The first Englishmen who looked upon this landscape were captives, seized at the raid upon Dover in 1689, and tramping their weary way to Montreal to become slaves for the French.

One March morning in 1712, Thomas Baker and thirty scouts surprised this village, burned the wigwams and almost exterminated the Pemigewasset Tribe. Raids by the French and Indians prevented settlements during the following forty years. The valley was explored by Josiah Brown in 1751, also by John Stark with three companions in 1752. One of them, William Stinson, was killed when Indians attacked along the Baker River, and Mount Stinson honors his name to this day. Robert Rogers followed the trails along these

rivers during the last of the French and Indian Wars. Certainly this region was not unexplored before 1763.

Meanwhile Governor Benning Wentworth, appointed the first royal governor by King George III in 1741, was longing for possession of northern New Hampshire and Vermont where the wealth of the colonial shipping merchants might be invested in land grants. As early as 1748, Meredith was granted and Holderness in 1751.

Immediately after the fall of Quebec to the English in 1759, Governor Wentworth sent surveyors, Joseph Blanchard, William McDuffee, Hercules Mooney and others, to block out townships, six miles square, along the banks of the lakes and rivers. Soon corporations were organized by Proprietors who received grants of some seventy townships about 1761, among them Rumney and Groton then named Cockermouth.

At Hollis, New Hampshire, a number of energetic men began to plan a corporation to obtain the grant that they named Plymouth in 1762. They were joined by about fifty other men, among them Governor Wentworth who claimed 500 acres in every township, Theodore Atkinson, Secretary of the Colony and other wealthy colonial officials.

In the summer of 1762, a few of these pioneers explored the grant and evidently selected sites for their future homes. As soon as their charter was granted on July 15, 1763 before the lots were surveyed, a few cabins were rolled up. The following winter was given to active preparations to remove their families to Plymouth in the summer of 1764.

## THE HOLDERNESS GRANT

Neighbors were then living across the river in Holderness. Samuel Livermore, Attorney to King George, was acquiring hundreds of acres in Holderness which then contained a part of Campton, Ashland and Sandwich. His employees had been sent to his grant to clear fields, erect several houses and construct a saw and a grist mill at the falls on Mill Brook that flowed into the Pemigewasset River, almost opposite the former Plymouth railroad station. Proved by State Papers, a ferry provided a crossing in 1764, possibly to connect Holderness with the trail along the west bank of the river that had been tramped by Indians over hundreds of years.

It may be well to observe that this period was disturbed with disputes between the King and Parliament with the Colonies about taxation while mob violence raged in Boston and occasionally in Portsmouth. The safety of a settlement far from such strife was an incentive as well as an investment. Samuel Livermore sympathized with the Colonies. To escape from becoming

involved in such politics, he removed his family to a home in Holderness in 1766.

The surveyors for Plymouth prepared three separate tracts for lots to each Proprietor: five and a half acres of grassy meadow, one sixteen acre lot of intervale, and two fifty acre lots of upland. In Parker's Inn at Dunstable, Massachusetts on December 20, 1763 the lots were drawn by one Proprietor removing a card bearing the name of a Proprietor from a receptacle and another man drawing a card containing the numbers of the three separate lots that were assigned to each Proprietor. Eighteen of the original list of Proprietors came to Plymouth. The limits of the grant were bounded by Rumney on the north, by Cockermouth on the west, by Alexandria and Bridgewater on the south, and Holderness and Campton on the east.

These pioneers profited by the experience of their ancestors who settled Dunstable. They realized that the first necessity was a saw and a corn mill. Onesipherus Marsh was authorized to go to "peneycook" to purchase two sets of irons, one for the corn mill, the other for the saw mill. Three men were to agree with "some person to build these mills in the following summer." As often happens, these mills were not completed that year and Plymouth's first crop of corn was ground elsewhere.

On April 16, 1764, a most important meeting gathered in the meeting-house at Hollis where a few men organized a church and accepted a covenant. The names of these members are not preserved, because their records were destroyed in a fire. Two are certain: John Willoughby, the first deacon, and Stephen Webster. To own a covenant was a serious vow that only a devoted, religious person was willing to assume.

By stipulation of the Charter, a minister must be employed by the Proprietors, not by a church. His salary was a minister's tax that was paid by each Proprietor or his successor, whether he settled in Plymouth or not.

The first minister was a most wise choice, Rev. Nathan Ward. He was a native of Newton, Massachusetts, well educated and forty-three years of age. At this time he had a wife and ten children. Before he was ordained to the ministry, he was a skilled carpenter at thirty years of age.

A diary by his son, Enoch, states, "Sir," the title for his father, "brother Nathan and I arrived in Plymouth on May 4, 1766." They built a log cabin at the foot of Ward Hill that burned three years later. Then, a framed house was erected upon the minister's lot on the top of the hill.

Mr. Ward was allowed thirty-six pounds for settlement and an annual salary of fifty pounds. His duties were exacting. He was expected to cultivate his farm to produce food for his family. The preparation of two long sermons each week, also the long devotional prayers, required meditation.

*Rev. Nathan Ward, a self-portrait.*

Without a doctor in the settlement, his attention to the ill was most important. Teaching the catechism to the children and writing letters for the illiterate must not be neglected. Often a religious ceremony demanded his presence in another community. Yet this faithful servant of God performed these duties throughout thirty-three years. He died in 1804 and rests in the Pleasant Valley Cemetery.

The town meetinghouse was not constructed until 1768, a log building at the foot of Ward Hill. The furnishings were not completed until 1771, although they consisted of rough seats of split logs with pieces of saplings for legs. The men and women sat on either side of the central aisle. The pulpit was a rude desk. Since no fireplace could supply heat for a room that would

seat one hundred or more persons no attempt to warm this space was considered. If the winter temperature was too severe, the Sabbath services were omitted.

Probably the first cemetery surrounded the meetinghouse. When the workmen were excavating for the concrete roadway at the foot of Ward Hill about twenty-five years ago, they discovered field stones so arranged that they appeared to mark graves. The historians of Plymouth believed that unknown graves of the early settlers were disturbed at this spot, because the usual custom of those days laid the dead to rest around the meetinghouse.

## THE COOS ROAD

The first important event of this first decade was clearing the Coos Road that is the same highway as Highland Street of the present day. When Jacob Bailey of Newburyport and John Hazen of Haverhill, Massachusetts became the owners of the ox-bows in the Connecticut Valley at Newbury, Vermont and Haverhill, New Hampshire, they applied immediately to the Provincial Assembly for an authorized road from Haverhill, New Hampshire to the seacoast.

This road was authorized in 1764 with every abutting land owner obliged to cut a path within six months or forfeit his right. State Papers record that over one hundred land owners lost their land because they disobeyed this law. This road was opened in Plymouth in 1767 from David Webster's tavern to the "wading place" in West Plymouth which is the bank of the Baker River where a covered bridge washed away in the flood of a few years past. This became the trade route during the following forty years, until other transportation for the products of the farms was provided to the coast and, in return, for importations from England and salt from the sea.

Soon after the meetinghouse was constructed, a new problem appeared. Governor John Wentworth persuaded the Provincial Assembly to grant a charter in 1769 for a college at Hanover named in honor of a generous donor, Lord Dartmouth of England. A class of five students would be prepared to graduate in August, 1771. The Governor and his Councillors desired to be present at this first commencement which presented the problem of access to Hanover.

## THE DARTMOUTH COLLEGE ROAD

The Assembly authorized a road from Wolfeboro, the summer residence of the Governor, to Hanover, to be constructed by the Proprietors of the towns through which this road would pass. The course was to be the responsibility of three men, from Wolfeboro to the property of Samuel Livermore at

the Pemigewasset River and another committee of three, from David Webster's tavern to Hanover. John House of Hanover, Jonathan Freeman and David Hobart of Plymouth were appointed for this task.

No tales about objections from the Proprietors of the Plymouth division are remembered, but in Tuftonboro and Moultonboro in the other division two wealthy Proprietors refused to permit the passage of the road through their grants, yet to no avail. Already many miles of bridle paths existed between Wolfeboro and Moultonboro, and men were paid to cut the pathway to Samuel Livermore's river bank.

In August, 1771, the village of Plymouth was without doubt excited, because Governor Wentworth and his Councillors, their servants, and other officials, sixty in all, were to be entertained over night. Samuel Livermore, David Webster and Parson Ward opened their houses. The following morning this company rode to Haverhill, because the college road through dense wilderness could not be made passable until the next year. Down the trail that Indians traveled along the Connecticut River, and military forces to Quebec in 1758 had tramped, this group of distinguished men arrived at Hanover.

By 1772 the boulders had been pried aside, trees cut and underbrush cleared so that this cavalcade rode the entire distance on the Dartmouth College Road. In 1773, a tradition that Governor Wentworth entered Hanover in his coach seems authentic. Mrs. Dean Currier, a Plymouth resident twenty years ago, related that her great grandparents, then residents of Hanover, saw the Governor riding in his coach. While it seems incredible that the College Road was passable along its entire course for a coach drawn by horses, possibly the Governor was met near Hanover by a coach and did ride in state into Hanover. Since the History of Dartmouth tells that Mrs. Wheelock, the wife of the President of the college, rode from Connecticut to Hanover in her coach, without doubt this coach was available for the Governor's ride.

Without a stretch of the imagination, one may picture the excitement along the Coos Road, now Highland Street, when sixty horsemen rode through Plymouth those three years that Governor Wentworth remained in office.

## FAMILIES TO REMEMBER

The family names of Hobart, Cummings, Huckins and Willoughby were prominent in this first decade. Possibly the Webster Family were the most influential of the pioneers. Abel Webster invested in the greater number of lots that he purchased from the Proprietors who desired to dispose of their rights. His nephew, David, purchased several and Samuel Livermore was another of his customers. He entertained Parson Ward in Hollis when he came there to preach four sermons before Plymouth existed. He probably

*This is the home of the first settler, Col. David Hobart, on the Fairground Road, 1764 – 1900. Notice that the angle of the roof is steep, and the eaves meet the window frames.*

settled upon a farm in West Plymouth with his wife and eleven children in 1765. Over a period of twenty years, he held many official positions in the town, also served as the representative in the Provincial Congress for Grafton County. After 1788 he removed to Kingston but died at the home of his daughter in Chester in 1801.

Among the younger pioneers was Captain David Webster, born in Chester, who grew to the height of six feet at the age of nineteen with the skill to accurately sight his flint-lock rifle which qualified him to become a scout in Rogers Rangers. At the age of twenty-six he returned to Chester, married the daughter of his step-mother, Elizabeth Clough, then went to Hollis to join in the plans for the settlement of Plymouth.

Without doubt, Captain David had tramped the trail along the Pemigewasset with the eye of a scout for a favorable spot for a home. He did not become a Proprietor; instead he purchased his lands wisely. He acquired the center of our village of today with boundaries from the river westward along Court Street, southward on Summer and Russell Streets, down Webster Street to the bank of the river. He erected a large log house on the site of our former

railroad station beside a brook that was fed by springs in the vicinity of Ward Hill. This he enlarged for a tavern that he maintained until 1800. He died in 1824.

In 1764, he purchased two slaves in Methuen, Massachusetts, Cisco and Dinah, for servants in his tavern. They became a part of the family and now sleep in the same lot in Trinity Cemetery with their master. The tavern was the meetingplace for the Sabbath services and town meetings until the meetinghouse was ready for use.

In Stearns' History of Plymouth the story is published about his journey from Hollis in the spring of 1764, driving his ox team with the wagon loaded with furniture over a trail that was only a bridle path from Smith River to Plymouth. Also the adventure of Mrs. Webster with Indians as she followed him weeks later, with her baby son.

When the Revolution demanded men to guard the frontier, David en-

—George Feinen

*The cliff where Elizabeth Webster stopped for the night about five miles south of Plymouth. A band of Indians held a pow-waw on the top of the cliff during the night. They did not discover Mrs. Webster and her baby David, hiding in the cave, or find her horse down on the bank of the river below. She arrived safely in Plymouth in the morning.*

listed a company for the county and retired years later with the rank of Colonel.

Stephen Webster, father of David and brother of Abel, built his home on a right that he purchased near the Starr King elm, that he opened for the first school in the town. He had been a teacher in earlier towns. In positions that required the keeping of records, his services were in demand. He is buried in an unmarked grave in the Pleasant Valley Cemetery, yet recorded on the original chart that is preserved by the present Association.

Since the Charter stipulated that every grantee should clear five acres for cultivation for every fifty acres in his grant during the first five years, this decade opened the forest for farms on the intervales. The soil was the humus laid down in past centuries. The uplands toward West Plymouth were soon purchased by new settlers. The population in 1773 numbered 345 persons, 57 families with nearly 200 children under sixteen years of age.

## SUMMARY

During this first decade the town possessed a meetinghouse, an organized church, a school, tavern, several grist mills, and saw mills, two passable roads for ox-teams and an increasing population.

*Haying in by-gone years, with a two-wheeled ox cart, an 18th century vehicle. (See pages 64 and 144.)*

# 1773-1783

Owing to the fact that the brooks that fell into the Baker River offered sites where dams could be readily erected, the first mills were set up in West Plymouth. The irons for the water wheels were dragged by human energy on the ice in winter from Penacook to Plymouth in 1765.

Many of the Proprietors sold their rights along the Coos Road, now Route 25, to settlers. David Nevins erected the first house on Ward Hill. Rev. Nathan Ward moved into his two story, frame house in 1771 on the minister's lot at the top of this hill, now number 122, Highland Street.

On the west side of this road, William George purchased a farm. His large barn was then built about opposite the Hatch Dairy. Years after, this barn was taken apart, then rebuilt across the road and is at present the Hatch Dairy's barn.

The George Clark farm was purchased by Benjamin Wells from Abel Webster. The small cottage in the west pasture near the woods is the original house on this farm.

The Arnold Spencer land became the home of the wealthy Widow Bridget Snow. A descendant, Mrs. Hattie Harriman Trow, related the story that Widow Snow with her son, Henry, and her four daughters lived in a dug-out until the son built his home along the Dartmouth College Road and the daughters found husbands. Another daughter was then in Hebron and her mother walked through the woods to make visits while the wolves howled in the dense forest. Widow Snow's grave is marked by the oldest headstone in Plymouth in the small cemetery near the Spencer barn.

The farm at the turn of the highway toward the Smith covered bridge became "The Pem Farm," owned by Abel Webster. On the meadow at the curve of the road, a brickyard supplied "water-struck" bricks. The molds were soaked in water before the clay was packed into them which left the surface of the bricks with lines or water marks that gave them this name.

According to the statement of the late George Clark, a brickyard was baking water-struck brick beside the present Yeaton Road, another at the "wading place" by the Baker River and a third near Loon Pond. The Currier Brook at Lower Intervale turned water wheels and a brickyard was located in that valley.

*Headstone at the grave of Widow Bridget Snow, oldest in Plymouth, at the cemetery on the Spencer Farm on Route 25.*

A most valuable product was potash, the basis of gunpowder. An ancient map marks "The Potash Pit" on the line of Rumney near the "Rolling Acres Farm." Another pit was near the line of Groton Hollow. In wide pits, elm wood and other hard woods were burned to ashes. These were leeched with a quantity of water and the resulting lye was evaporated by boiling in caldrons. The residue was potash or saltpeter. Mrs. Elizabeth Stewart recalls the tradition that "the elms of Rumney saved the Revolution."

With corn meal, bricks, lumber and potash in production in the brief time since forests covered these farms, one does not wonder that the name, "Valley of Industry" was applied to West Plymouth as the years went by.

## GRAFTON COUNTY

The first event of public importance in this second decade was the division of the Colony into counties. The northern section was named Grafton. A court house was erected in Haverhill and another in Plymouth in 1774, the latter on land that was purchased from David Webster, now the corner of Main and Highland Streets. The frame was set up. Then, according to tradition, Mrs. Webster objected because those cruel implements of punishment, the pillory and stocks, were in sight of her windows. Captain Webster arranged to exchange the site for about two acres now at the corner of Pleasant and Russell Streets, "east of the ledge," also to remove and finish the building at his own expense, according to specified size and materials. This building "served for the more easy administration of Justice" until 1823.

Penalties were severe. On June 16, 1774, Charles Newton was convicted of stealing from John Willoughby. The Superior Court fixed his sentence that he be set in the pillory in some open space and there have one of his ears cut off and be imprisoned one whole year, and pay the cost of prosecution.

This sentence was changed to a fine of ten shillings to the King or be whipped ten stripes on his naked back by the public whipper. Also that he pay to John Willoughby nine shillings, being three times the value of the goods stolen and he must pay the cost of the prosecution, or be sold into servitude to John Willoughby for a term of six months.

Fine paid in Court is recorded.

## THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

On December 12, 1774, Paul Revere rode from Boston to Portsmouth to warn the patriots that they should seize the gunpowder in Fort William and Mary, located upon an island in the harbor at Portsmouth. The British were preparing to remove this powder to Boston. On the night of December 14, John Sullivan, John Langdon and a band of volunteers captured the fort, secretly transferred the powder to Durham and concealed it beneath the pulpit of the meetinghouse until it could be gradually taken to the camp of the Colonials.

This powder was doubly valuable, because John Stark fought the Battle of Bunker Hill with it. Also, the explosive power of this English powder exceeded the force of that which the Colonials manufactured with their native potash. This imported powder was mixed with the native product to provide a greater supply for their cannon. For this reason, possibly the elms of the Baker River Valley furnished some extra shots for John Stark's troops at the rail fence that was stuffed with hay from John Fenton's farm near Breed's Hill on June 17, 1775.

John Fenton was a wealthy resident of Portsmouth who purchased, or so he claimed, hundreds of acres in Bridgewater that included the farm now owned by Mr. Preston Martin, called "The Tory Farm." Large barns were erected and equipped with expensive implements of that day. Fields were cleared where herds of cattle were pastured and crops were harvested by many employees.

Within a two year period, Mr. Fenton divided his time between Portsmouth and Plymouth. He participated in civic affairs, won the respect of the voters and was elected in 1774 to represent Plymouth in the Provincial Assembly. He gave the impression that he favored the patriots' cause, yet all the time he was serving the royalists.

When his duplicity was discovered, the patriots at Portsmouth attempted to arrest him, but he fled for refuge into the home of Governor Wentworth. A gun was aimed at the door and his surrender demanded. He paid the Governor the courtesy of obeying the patriots. After being confined for several months, he was permitted to flee to Ireland. The British granted him a pension and he died in 1785. His taxes were never paid in Plymouth and his employees received no compensation for their labors. Tory Road perpetuates his memory in Bridgewater.

The battle of Lexington on the 18th of April, 1775, definitely proved that the thirteen colonies were at war with England. Later in that year several regiments were enlisted to invade Canada. This experiment ended in disaster, because the army was poorly equipped and disease claimed many lives. Ebenezer and Jeremiah Blodgett died of camp fever. Almost panic seized the inhabitants of the northern frontier when faced by invasion by bands of Canadians and Indians.

Committees of Safety were organized in several towns under the command of Captain David Webster. The selectmen of Plymouth sent a petition to the colonial assembly at Exeter for 45 guns, 100 pounds of powder and 100 weight of lead.

These provisions were none too soon. In June of 1776, an alarm from Lancaster that a messenger had brought news of an invasion from Canada sent Captain Webster with his armed guards to protect these northern towns. Whether these scouts rode horses up the Coos Road to Haverhill, then along the trails to Littleton and Lancaster, some seventy miles, or tramped with their muskets on their shoulders and their supply of corn meal on their backs, is not recorded.

During this alarm in the Connecticut Valley, at Philadelphia the Liberty Bell rang and the Declaration of Independence was proclaimed. But gloom

*British Cannon on the Courthouse Green, 1777*

settled over this northern region. A British army was assembling in Canada that threatened to invade the Champlain Valley and isolate New England.

Two new regiments were ordered to enroll. With imminent danger menacing their homes, ninety-one men enlisted from Plymouth. Considering that the total number of inhabitants was 382, only 57 heads of families, and scores of children under sixteen years of age, the situation was critical. Women and children cultivated the crops, fed the cattle and sheep, spun the cloth for the homespun garments and kept the home fires burning.

In August, 1777, Burgoyne's army was advancing down the Hudson Valley. John Stark at Bennington, Vermont discovered that a detachment intended to seize the stores of the Colonials in the town. This quick-witted scout practiced the tactics that he had learned in other skirmishes. The British

troops surrendered to the New Hampshire patriots. In this battle, Colonel David Hobart and his eleventh regiment led an attack upon the Tory breastworks with such success that he and his men received commendation for their bravery. With Colonel Hobart were eleven other men from Plymouth. His nephew, Solomon Hobart was killed. Col. Hobart served in the French and Indian War before he became a Proprietor on the Fairground Road in Plymouth.

With General Burgoyne's army at Saratoga, an emergency arose that called for immediate action. The Committee of Safety for the Province was summoned to a meeting. This urged more enlistments with Lieut. Colonel David Webster in command of volunteers for this section of New Hampshire. These untrained men hurriedly marched to Saratoga in September, 1777. There they served under General Gates with orders to hold the line of defense, but were not actively engaged in the actual battle. Amos Webster, younger brother of Lieut. Col. David Webster was killed in this Battle of Saratoga, declared by historians one of the ten decisive battles in the history of the world, on October 8, 1777.

Ten days later these soldiers from Plymouth witnessed the surrender of Burgoyne's army. Then they were discharged to return to their farms with papers stating that they had faithfully served in the Northern Army. Colonel David Hobart resigned in 1779 and Lieut. Col. David Webster became full colonel of the 11th regiment for the remainder of the war.

When Burgoyne surrendered, the danger of invasion of New England ceased. During the following four years, when quotas for enlisted men were assigned, Plymouth fulfilled all obligations, even paying generous bounties near the close of the war.

Also as food supplies were requisitioned, the response was immediate. In 1781 Plymouth was assessed for 7053 pounds of beef. One ponders in what condition this was delivered, on the hoof, salted or frozen? Corn meal and peas were articles for barter in payment of taxes since paper money was not "worth a Continental." Women contributed their homespun linen and wool. Certainly the town of Plymouth during the eight years of the American Revolution had a record of supreme loyalty to the cause of liberty.

## DISTRICT SCHOOLS

Meanwhile schools were not neglected. The parents were not illiterate, and by the light of the fireplaces they taught their children to read and write to save taxes. In 1774 the town was divided into "societies" or districts with a vote at the town meeting to provide a "constant writing school." The next year five districts were established to employ Nathan Ward, Jr. to teach 312

—G. G. Clark

*The first schoolhouse in West Plymouth, destroyed in 1849.*

days, his time to be allotted among the districts according to the amount of taxes that each paid. School houses were not constructed until the Revolution was closed.

Textbooks were unknown. The Bible and the Westminster Catechism served for readers while a slab of wood and a bit of charcoal from the fireplace substituted for writing materials. If the Stearns History of Plymouth is consulted on page 274, a list of the taxpayers in each school district may be read, a most valuable school census of heads of families in 1775.

The year 1776 brought sadness to the Ward Family and the community. A fatal disease attacked the older children that caused the death of five of the Ward Family within a period of thirty-six days. Apparently this so affected their mother that she died a few months later, leaving Parson Ward with four young sons to protect. After some months, Miss Lydia Clough of Salem, Mass. became the second wife of the minister.

## A NEW HAMPSHIRE CONSTITUTION

Throughout the Revolution no stable colonial government existed. County courts were suspended, leaving the town to punish offenders of the laws.

The colonial legislature voted to call delegates, who were appointed to represent groups of towns, to a Provincial Congress with power to frame a state constitution. Five different sessions of this Congress were convened before an acceptable constitution was ratified by the towns. So thoroughly was this document compiled that it served as a model for the Federal Constitution. Three representatives for Plymouth should be mentioned: Abel Webster, Francis Worcester and Samuel Emerson. Abel Webster has been honored already for his many years of civic responsibilities. He was the representative in four of the Provincial Congresses, then he moved to Kingston.

Elder Francis Worcester, as he was designated, came to Plymouth from Hollis in 1770, aged 48 years. He was a deacon in Hollis and soon was appointed to the same honored position in the church at Plymouth. He was the son of a clergyman in Bradford, Mass., well educated, "gentle and attractive in manner, deliberate in the discharge of duty." His contribution in the fifth Congress was highly valuable.

Samuel Emerson was born in Haverhill, Mass., and came to Plymouth from Hollis in 1770, aged 36 years. Immediately he was appointed to receive and distribute the guns and ammunition that the colony delivered for the protection of the town. He cultivated a farm on the present Fairground Road to support a family of eleven children. Simultaneously he filled the office of selectman, town clerk for 27 years and justice of the peace for 28 years. His reputation was one of exceptional understanding and judgment and his honesty was without a flaw. He drew many legal papers for his townsmen. He was the representative also in the fifth Colonial Congress.

When the county courts were resumed, he was appointed Assistant Judge in the Court of Common Pleas in 1776-1782 and Chief Justice until retirement because of age in 1806. He died in 1819 at 85 years of age. His grave may be found in the small cemetery near the Fairground Road, probably on the farm that he owned for over half a century.

## THE BAKER RIVER BRIDGE

Near the close of this decade in 1786 the town decided to build a bridge over the Baker River, probably on the Coos Road since this was the traveled highway, and voted to run a lottery to pay for it. Parson Ward offered to donate ten pounds of his annual salary to the enterprise, although his salary had been reduced one half for two years during the Revolution. Bridges at this period were framed of logs with planks that were held in place by heavy logs along the two sides with a constant rumbling as traffic rolled across the length of the bridge.

## RELIGIOUS DISSENSION

Unfortunately, harmony did not exist continually among the inhabitants. In 1780, discord arose about religious doctrines. Fifteen taxpayers refused to assent to the teaching of Rev. Ward, remained absent from his religious services and were delinquent with their minister's tax during several years.

When the Proprietors surrendered their responsibilities to the organized Town of Plymouth in July, 1766, the voters agreed to pay a salary to Rev. Ward of 50 pounds and 30 cords of wood. Although a Congregational church was established with a few members, according to the demands of the Charter, the town, not the church, employed the minister. Very properly the tax collector assessed the estates of these fifteen voters.

Abel Webster, one of the dissenters, rode his horse to Exeter with a petition to the Provincial Assembly that asked for relief from this situation. Deacon Francis Worcester was the representative for Plymouth in the Assembly. Through his intercession with Mr. Webster the petition was withheld while a compromise was arranged that pledged the dissenters to pay the taxes that they owed with an agreement that they be excused from future payments to Rev. Ward. This arrangement established a precedent that was adopted in other towns with disastrous results in future years for ministers' salaries.

## SUMMARY

In this decade Grafton County was organized and the courthouse was erected. The town was divided into school districts. The Provincial Congress framed the Constitution of the State of New Hampshire.

*The Hatch Dairy Barn that served as the meetinghouse in 1788 – 89, on Route 25.*

# 1783-1793

The Town of Plymouth was twenty years of age. Changes were now developing in the West Plymouth section. The log cabins and dug-outs were replaced by framed structures of one story design, the roofs slanting at a steep angle to the window frames and one large chimney a bit off center of the ridge-pole. Several may be found even to this day along the Coos Road.

The present Highland Street was a narrow cart path that passed the log meetinghouse and continued to the top of Ward Hill. Two years earlier, 1781, Enoch Ward began to frame a two story house, now called "The Emerson House." He had invited the neighbors to a raising and now, after many months, the house was ready to be occupied in 1783, the first of the colonial type dwellings that gradually lined Highland Street. Enoch was the business man of the Ward Family. During the Revolution he rode his horse to Portsmouth and to Boston to barter products of the farms for imported necessities. He found his bride in Concord but lived in Boscawen where two children were born.

Now he established his home on Highland Street, and began to erect other houses at dates that are difficult to determine, because evidently one half of a two story house would be erected and the other half much later; for example the present 1820 and Hunt houses, both of the same plan, are worthwhile studies in antique designs.

A possession of Enoch's descendants, the Hunt Family, is a small diary that lists his transactions during the Revolution. He died on July 29, 1825, yet his colonial houses stand as memorials of his skill.

## THE SECOND MEETINGHOUSE

The population was crowding the log meetinghouse. Although the taxpayers considered a larger structure in 1781, the Revolution had so depleted the financial situation that not until 1787 was a committee appointed to procure the timbers, framed and ready to raise in the fall.

Probably no event was celebrated with such enthusiasm as the raising. Thirty-nine pounds in taxes were appropriated for the dinner at noon and while nine pounds paid for the beef, several barrels of New England rum account for a part of the expenses, as was the custom of a raising. The frames

*The 1820 House on Highland Street. The west rooms were built by Enoch Ward, Jr. in 1800, the east rooms by Leonard George about 1820. This is one of the few Colonial homes with the overhang at the base of the gable.*

for the walls were spread upon the ground, pinned together with wooden pins. The front wall was lifted by manpower upon the stone foundation and braced with strong poles. Then the side walls and lastly the back were lifted and the master carpenter rode high on the top plates to fasten the pins at the corners. The rafters were set into the roof trusses, each of which weighed nearly ten thousand pounds, and the ridge pole was set in place, certainly a gigantic task that demanded all of the ropes and the manpower of the entire vicinity.

The walls were boarded, roof covered and temporary seats provided at this time. Then the building stood for several years before even the interior was completed.

Meanwhile some impatient person thought to hasten the voters by setting a fire that consumed the log meetinghouse in 1785. Again the Webster tavern accommodated many small gatherings, and King George's barn was arranged for the Sabbath services. As we now drive past the Hatch Dairy, observe the barn that then stood on the other side of the Coos Road which was this temporary meetinghouse, now removed to the present location.

*The shay that Dr. John Rogers may have used. He lived from 1755 to 1814. His son, Dr. Samuel Rogers, followed him, 1785 to 1858.*

In 1781 or 1782 the first permanent physician came to Plymouth. Two doctors had briefly lived in town, but were soon called to become surgeons in the Revolution. How several hundred inhabitants existed without a doctor seems impossible to understand today. Women were experienced in the culture and application of medication with native herbs. A bag of hops was ready to heat to relieve a toothache; lye soap was a painful yet potent antiseptic for a cut; sage tea, or smartweed, relieved a cold. Grandmothers presided at childbirths apparently with native skill, since making a study in the genealogical volume of the Stearns History reveals that few infants died before they were two years of age.

The reputation that Dr. Rogers bequeathed to the future was of a skilled, educated, courteous and compassionate friend, the latter attribute being his greatest asset. His presence beside the ill was a healing balm.

Dr. Rogers built a house on South Main Street, then another nearby where he became the first postmaster in 1795. Post riders had delivered mail from Portsmouth since 1781 and regularly since 1785. Postage to Plymouth on one letter for 500 miles was twenty-five cents.

## THE FIRST STORE

Not to shop at a store is unimaginable today, yet a quarter of a century passed before a store opened its doors in Plymouth. The first merchant to this

day is mentioned by his entire name, Jabez Hatch Weld, presuming that his personality was impressive. He established his store on South Main Street in 1790, selling groceries, grain, cattle and real estate, until his sudden death in 1824, leaving his son to continue the business.

Mr. Weld was a prosperous man as proved by his possession of a slave named Antonio. The tale was related by Miss Caroline Mudgett at a meeting of the D.A.R. about the trial and conviction of Antonio for stealing. This crime demanded a public whipping with a many-lashed whip.

The magistrate who was responsible for this punishment tied the victim to a large tree near the court house for the night. When the public appeared to witness this cruel spectacle, no Antonio was found. Some sympathetic individual had cut the bonds and the slave had disappeared never to be found in Plymouth. Yet Antonio was not forgotten, because the tree where he spent some hours of the darkness was known while it stood as "Antonio's Tree."

## THE FEDERAL CONSTITUTION

The Treaty of Peace that terminated the Revolution was signed in 1783. A convention was called to frame a Constitution of the United States at Philadelphia on May 20, 1787 and four months later announced that a document was ready for ratification by the thirteen states to become operative when nine had ratified.

The following story is credited to Miss Caroline Mudgett, thorough historian of Plymouth, recalled from a paper that she gave to Asquamchumauke Chapter, D.A.R.:

Delegates to represent the towns in New Hampshire assembled in Exeter at a convention to consider ratification of this document. Both state and individual rights seemed to be omitted to the dissatisfaction of these cautious representatives. Samuel Livermore was the presiding officer while Francis Worcester represented Plymouth.

When Samuel Livermore realized that the convention did not intend to consent to ratification, he advised that a recess be voted to convene again in June.

During this interim, both Mr. Livermore and Francis Worcester mounted their horses to ride from town to town to reason with the delegates who were opposed to ratification, until every man understood the problems.

At the date in June that the convention re-convened, three other states were meeting and eight others had ratified. On June 21, 1787, the delegates voted to ratify with the proviso that a bill of rights be submitted to the first session of the new congress.

Then a rider with the necessary papers was sent to Philadelphia with in-

*Caroline Walker Mudgett*

*1865 – 1957*

structions to spare neither himself nor steeds to win the race should the other three states ratify. One of the three did vote in the affirmative but the rider from New Hampshire delivered his papers first. Thus New Hampshire became the ninth state to ratify and so made the Constitution operative. On April 30, 1789, George Washington was inaugurated as the first President of the United States.

Miss Mudgett did not hesitate to express her gratification in the fact that two citizens of this vicinity deserved honor for the important wisdom that each displayed with their methods of persuasion among the delegates rather than creating antagonism because of misunderstanding the issues: Samuel Livermore and Francis Worcester.

After the Revolution the problem of district schools provided a topic for community discussion. Ten years later, in 1792, at a town meeting, the voters decided to divide the town into four districts and to build a school house in each district with dimensions of twenty-one by twenty-six feet and a nine foot stud.

A committee of four men was appointed to procure a suitable teacher for

—G. G. Clark

*Interior of the old brick schoolhouse at Plymouth and Bridgewater Union District, about 1853.*

a "Grammar School." This plan seems to indicate that the small children were expected to be taught their ABC's at home, because a grammar school was for older pupils. Illiteracy was unknown in Plymouth at this time.

A suitable teacher was a man. The son of Eleazar Wheelock, the President of Dartmouth College, and several other undergraduates of the college were employed, thus aiding these students to defray some part of their expenses. Schools were kept a number of weeks in each schoolhouse.

The son of Widow Bridget Snow taught over a period of fifteen years. He was accused of Tory sympathies during the Revolution because of letters that he sent to soldiers that contained ideas that were construed to be disloyal. Later these were believed to be facetious remarks and Benjamin was permitted to return from Nova Scotia where he fled for a time. Evidently he was kindly received and hired to resume his teaching.

At the turn of the 19th century, comprehension of living conditions, then and now, is impossible. The pace cannot be estimated other than by comparison. Riding a horse was rapid transportation at several miles per hour along the rough bridle paths. The deliberate gait of an ox team on the ride to church

on a Sabbath morning would test the power of self control beyond endurance today. Walking would be preferable.

The contrast in comfortable living in the year 1803 and today is incomprehensible. The water supply for man and beast presented problems. A brook on a farm was a necessity unless a well could be excavated and an oaken bucket utilized. Fortunately for homes in our village many springs flowed from the terraces above Main Street. One of the daily burdens was carrying water in and out of the homes, often the task of growing boys in the families. Tubs of many sizes of the homemade sort served for dishpans, laundry and bathtubs and farmyard utensils.

Only a fireplace sufficed for heating the houses and for cooking purposes. Since the fires never were allowed to be quenched in the kitchen, the brick chimneys were always warm, certainly an advantage in cold weather. Sleeping quarters were freezing cold in winter, only a hot stone tucked between the blankets tempered the chill at bedtime.

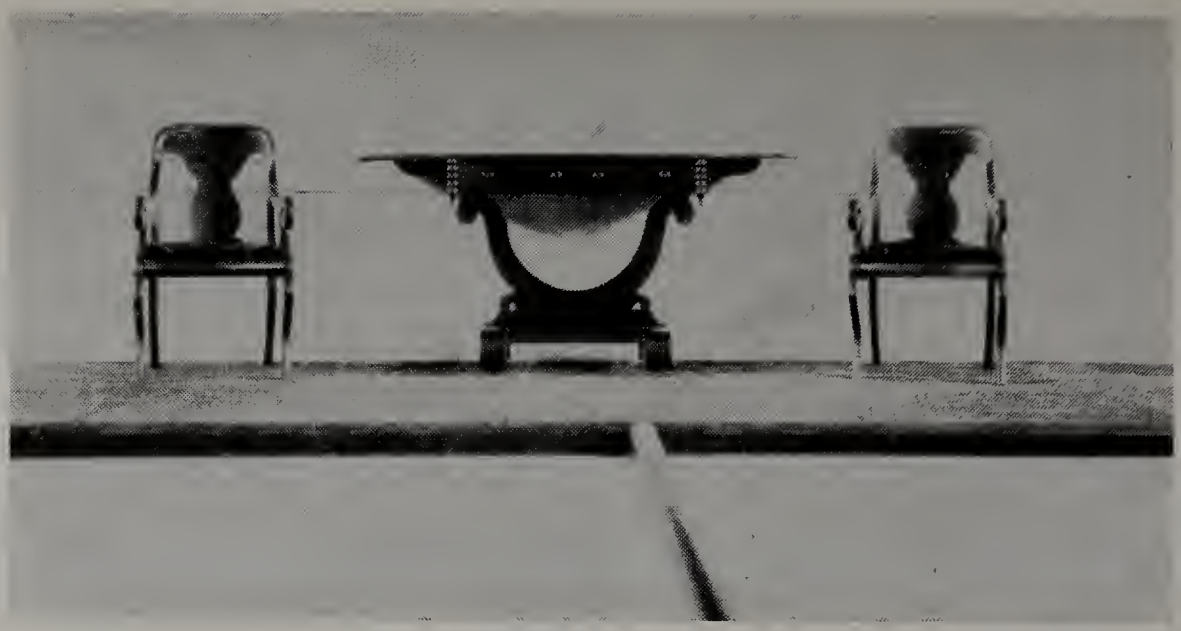
Candles composed of fats that were carefully conserved from beef and lamb drippings, so called, furnished necessary light where the flame of the fireplace could not penetrate the darkness.

Opening cans are our daily privileges to be appreciated in contrast to the task of preserving the products of the farm for winter use. Berries and vegetables were dried, meat was salted or frozen solid, wheat and corn were reduced to meal and flour at the grist mill. Bunches of herbs were tied to dry for flavoring and medicinal purposes.

Clothing was a long process from the wool of the sheep to a garment. Shoes were a luxury that were worn in mid-winter or at the Sunday meetings. Stockings were knitted with wooden needles and mittens were too valuable to lose.

Few persons "left town," an expression that often indicated that nobody except the minister or representative to the legislature traveled ten miles outside the limits of the township unless guilty of a misdemeanor. News was the exchange of neighborhood events between the two services on the Sabbath around the lunch hour or at the tavern where the men congregated. Newspapers were unknown, letters seldom received, and only illness called housewives to assist their friends for nightwatchers.

Metal was imported from England. Kettles of iron or brass were passed from house to house frequently. Tools were precious property, such as knives, shears, hammers and chisels. With these and improvised lathes and planes many pieces of household furniture were manufactured such as the lyre table that stands in the chancel of the Congregational church that Enoch Ward made for the second meetinghouse, about 1800, for the price of two pounds and



*This mahogany lyre table was carved by Enoch Ward for the communion service in the Ward Hill meetinghouse, at the price of two pounds, five shillings. It is over 150 years old.*

five shillings, as stated by Mr. George Clark. Examine the four chairs that were also used in the meetinghouse to appreciate the skill of those cabinet makers of the years gone by.

This was the period when the colonial buildings were erected in Salem, Mass. and Portsmouth, N. H. by the skilled ship carpenters. Without doubt the sons of the Ward Family viewed the carving on the doorways and the mantels of the fireplaces in Newton, Mass. before they came to Plymouth, and others from Hollis and southern New England knew the beauty of the furniture that is now prized as antiques.

Women understood the designs for coverlets and linens that were produced on their hand looms. Their brick ovens baked foods from recipes that have been bequeathed to present housewives. Vitamins were present in the products of the humus soil and health was not a troublesome topic of conversation.

Everybody worked. Small children were taught to pick up the chips around the chopping blocks, and every child was assigned his stint of daily tasks. Idleness was a besetting sin.

## SUMMARY

Events of this decade were the beginning of the second meetinghouse, the first doctor, a store, New Hampshire the ninth state to ratify the Federal Constitution, and building schoolhouses.

—Doris W. Wherland

*A coverlet of linen warp and blue wool for woof, produced on the farm. The pattern is "The Governor's Garden" or "St. Ann's Robe." This was woven by Phoebe Cass, a relative of Mrs. Blanche S. Smith. This heirloom belongs to Mrs. Elwin M. Smith.*

# 1793-1803

## MOOR RUSSELL

When the financial problems after the Revolution were solved, prosperity brought surplus commodities for sale from the farms. This situation demanded the genius of an enterprising business man. Such an individual was already to capture this opportunity. His name was Moor Russell, who was born on October 30, 1757 at Litchfield.

At the age of eighteen years he was a soldier in the Battle of Bunker Hill and continued until 1779 in the northern army. He was a surveyor with a trained eye for estimating land values. Grafton County appealed immediately, influencing him to purchase a large tract in Haverhill in 1777.

In addition to farming, he became a trader in cattle and lumber. His ability was soon in demand for town offices: representative to the state legislature, justice of the peace and a founder of Haverhill Academy.

His business evidently caused him to become acquainted with Plymouth, especially at the tavern of Col. David Webster where he met Elizabeth Webster, the only daughter of the family. Although he was twice her age of seventeen years, she became Mrs. Russell on December 23, 1790.

Where this couple resided during the following five years is not recorded but two children were born in Plymouth and two others were born in Haverhill before 1800. Meanwhile, according to family tradition, the site of the present Russell House was purchased from the property of David Webster for the future home of the Russell Family and a small house was erected that is now the ancient kitchen, said to have been built in 1797. The equipment included a large fireplace and brick oven. Beside the fireplace was a device for heating water that consisted of a fire-box, connected to the chimney with a flue, and above this a large covered iron kettle surrounded by a wall of bricks, a modern appliance for that time.

Behind this house several stables extended that were demolished about twenty-five years ago when the State of New Hampshire purchased this property. As the family increased, additional rooms were constructed toward Highland Street.

In 1798 Russell's store was erected on Highland Street above the present post office where a thriving business prospered until 1822 when a brick build-

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*Moor Russell's kitchen of 1797, equipped with a fireplace with an iron kettle on the crane, the brick oven, and an iron kettle enclosed with bricks and with a fire box beneath it. The family of four people lived in this room several years.*

ing was built on the site of the post office. This determined that West Plymouth was no longer the center of trade in the town. Moor Russell established the future growth of the business district of Plymouth.

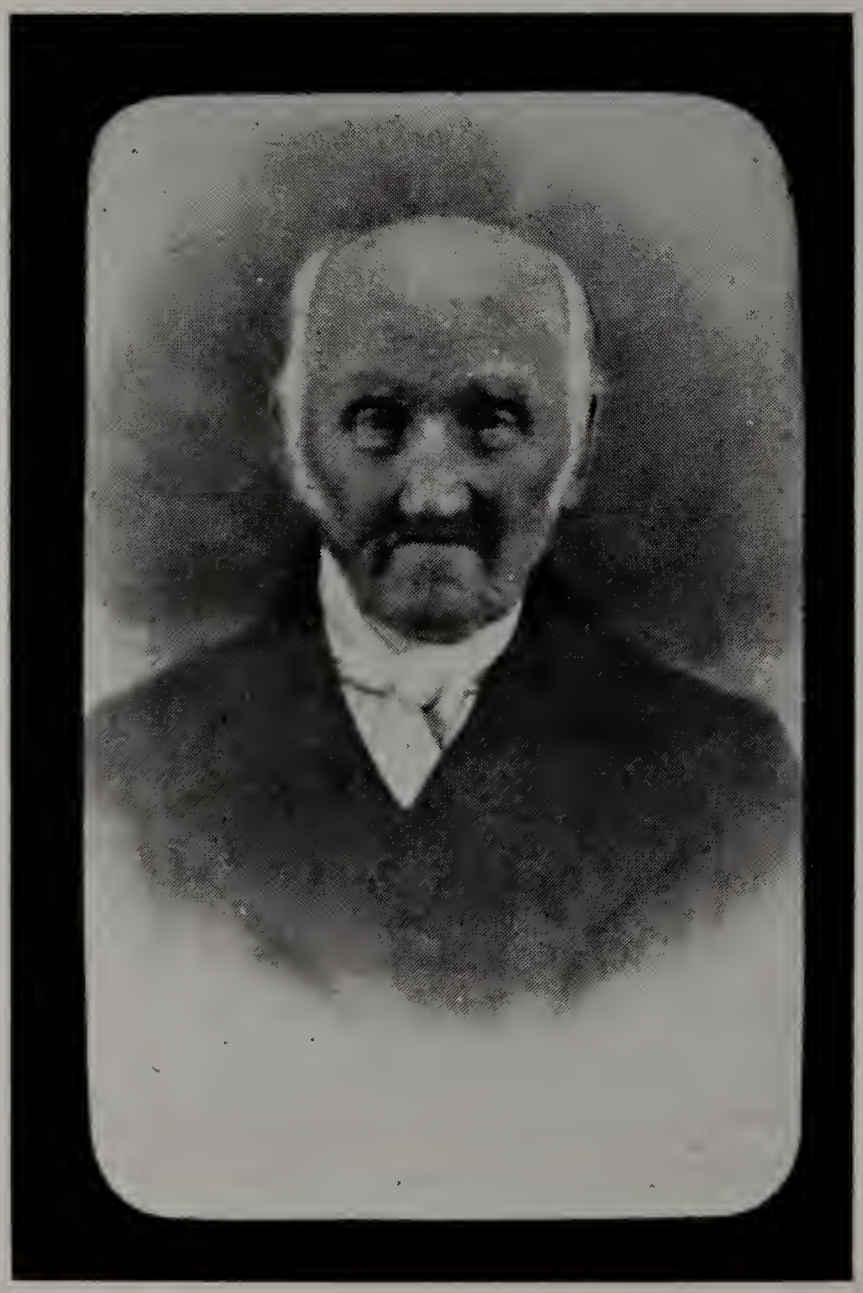
Soon Mr. Russell developed a trucking business with six and eight horse teams carrying the products of these valley farms to Portsmouth over the Coos Road, a distance of about seventy miles, and returning with necessary commodities for the increasing population.

Today this old province road may be traced and for the most part traveled from North Haverhill to Durham Falls through Warren, Wentworth, Rumney, Ashland, Meredith Center, along Pleasant Street in Laconia to the wading place on Main Street, then down Route 107 to Barnstead, through the woods to Barrington, Madbury and Durham to the falls in the Oyster River. General John Sullivan of Revolutionary fame constructed wharfs and a large store house near his residence that is yet standing, where he shipped this produce

down the rivers to Portsmouth in sail boats and brought back the goods to sell in the north country.

Necessary supplies included salt, metal goods such as tools, utensils for both home and farm, leather for shoes and many other purposes and, gradually, imported cloth and woods for furniture. Only a vivid imagination brings mental pictures of these teams, wheeling over rough, dusty pathways in summer, mud in spring and fall and some trips in early winter.

Mr. Russell participated in the religious life of the community and became a leader in temperance reforms, being the first among the merchants to cease to sell intoxicating liquors. He was generous to those in need and a power for good throughout the town and county. He died at the age of ninety-four years leaving his sons to continue the business.



MOOR RUSSELL, 1757 – 1851

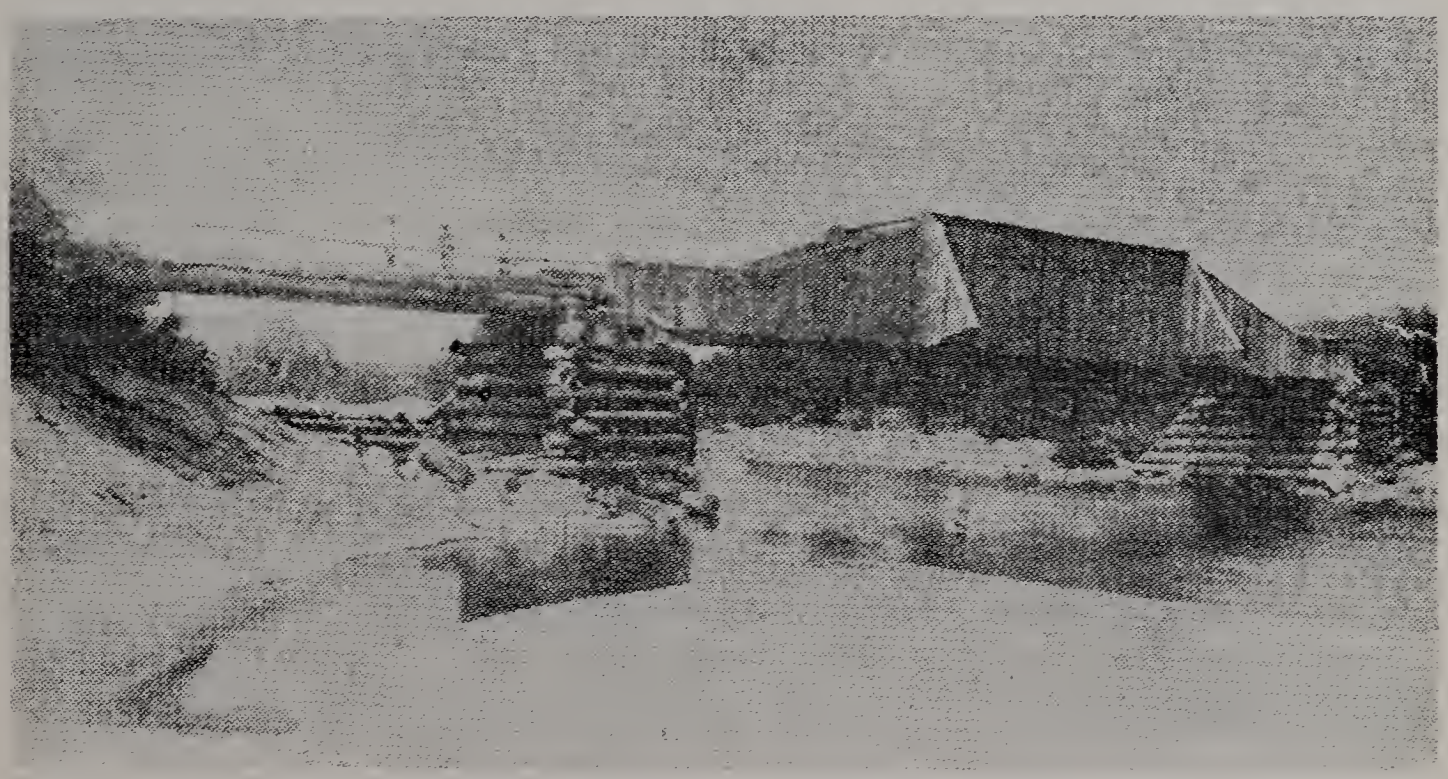
## THE TOLL BRIDGE

Since wagons loaded with valuable goods and drawn by several spans of horses must now cross the Pemigewasset River, a bridge became a necessity. Two prominent families, Livermore of Holderness and Webster of Plymouth, requested the legislature to grant to them the right to form a corporation to build a toll bridge.

The Recorded Acts of the State of New Hampshire prove in Volume 11, page 42, that on December 12, 1797, Arthur Livermore, David Webster, George Williamson Livermore, William Webster, Thomas Thompson and David Webster, Jr. were incorporated for the purpose of building and keeping a toll bridge over the Pemigewasset River between the towns of New Holderness and Plymouth.

That this bridge was built is proved by later State Papers, yet no description of this structure is known. Since the trusses that engineers designed in later years were not patented in 1797, probably the same method was employed that is seen today in mill ponds to anchor the booms to contain the saw logs.

Abutments of huge boulders supported the ends of the bridge. Then a framework made of split timbers ten or twelve feet long formed the four sides of a square that was filled with large rocks. Several of these so called cribs were anchored at intervals in the bed of the river and heavy timbers were stretched from crib to crib on two opposite sides to form the frame of the



*An early bridge supported on cribs.*

*At left, first Webster tavern (1764); at right, second tavern.*

bridge. After planks for the floor were laid across these timbers, large logs were laid along their ends on either side to fasten the floor in place.

Today the river is about three hundred feet in width; doubtless it was in 1797. The bridge was located about thirty rods north of David Webster's tavern and also north of the mouth of Mill Brook on the Holderness bank.

## THE SECOND WEBSTER TAVERN

Tradition relates that the log tavern of 1764 that Col. David Webster built was later replaced by a small framed house and enlarged as business increased. Col. Webster was sixty-two years of age in 1800 and ready to resign his position as tavern keeper. He was the sheriff of Grafton County, and retained this office until 1809.

William, a third son of Col. David Webster, also called Colonel from a state military title, succeeded his father as keeper of the tavern. He erected an entirely new building with a gambrel roof and sufficient capacity to accommodate the judges and other officials when the county court convened in Plymouth.

Fortunately a daguerreotype was preserved by the next tavern keeper, Mr. Dennison R. Burnham, that was presented to the Young Ladies Library

Association by his grandson. A rude log shed in the foreground of this old print is said to be the relic of the first log structure of 1764.

This fine colonial tavern, beside the Main Street, became a famous inn among travelers who were beginning to visit this northern section of the state to initiate the tourist business that was increasing even in the year of 1800. The Webster tavern did not stand alone on the south side of Main Street. In 1800, Steven Webster is said to have built a two story colonial home with an arched doorway in the center of the lower story, located about on the site of the Newberry store of 1962.

The house known for many years as Clarkland on Route 25 was also erected in 1800 by Samuel Wells for a tavern. This originally did not have the large ell of today. The kitchen was on the northwest corner and the tap room on the front, with a cupboard that filled the space beside the big chimney with a sliding door in the wall. This opened into the bar and hot water for the toddy was passed through from the kitchen fireplace.

The entire second story front was a dance hall fitted with folding paneled partitions that divided this large room into three sleeping rooms. The walls were painted a pale buff color and stenciled garlands of roses and foliage decorated both walls and ceiling.

The Masonic fraternity was organized in this hall on October 25, 1803 and assembled there for its meetings. A tale is related that a curious woman resolved to discover the secrets of the lodge. She ascended to the attic to listen through the thin ceiling of the hall below. Unfortunately she stumbled and pushed her foot through the lath and plaster to her disgrace and the indignation of the Masonic brothers.

## INTERIOR OF THE MEETINGHOUSE

About 1793 an auction was held to sell the floor space of the meetinghouse for pews to heads of families. Since the plans were entirely different from the churches of today, a description may be fitting.

The sum of four hundred and twenty-eight pounds, six shillings, and eight pence was paid to erect forty-six pews. Two adjacent rows of rectangular pews covered the center of the floor, surrounded by narrow aisles. Platforms, eight inches in height, were built around the four walls and upon these smaller square pews were set, except for vacant spaces at the south, east and west doorways and for the pulpit at the north wall.

The name, sheep-pens, was often applied to these pews, because a wall about three feet in height, topped by a balustrade a foot high, surrounded whatever floor space a family purchased. Three sides within the pews held

board seats with hinges so that they might be lifted when the occupants stood during the long prayers, as was the custom on the Sabbath. After the amen, the clatter of falling seats upon their supports is always mentioned in every description of a religious service.

The pulpit was in three sections. At the ceiling hung an octagonal canopy called a sounding board. Beneath this at the height of the gallery a platform was built against the wall, sufficiently wide for the seat for the minister and standing room. At the edge of this platform the pulpit wall extended, with a projection in the middle that was supported by a carved base that is now the lectern in the chancel of the present church. The pulpit desk today is a copy of the old pulpit.

The finish of the white pine panels may be seen on the small panel that is now in the wall of the present pulpit. A stain was used consisting of a brown bark soaked in vinegar and applied to the wood before it was rubbed to a shining finish, a task for skilled workmen through many months.

The third section of the pulpit was at the floor level, called the deacons' pew because the deacons sat here facing the audience, with a paneled wall around one side and the front and a door at the left side. On the inside of this front wall hung on hinges a semi-circular shelf that held the pewter service at communion, or any notes and the gavel of the moderator at the annual town meetings.

Beside the entrance door to the deacons' pew a staircase to the pew for the preacher ascended to a platform one step below the pew door that allowed this to swing back against the wall when it was opened. The balustrade was always ornamented with hand-turned spindles and a polished rail.

Pillars that supported the plates for the gallery were painted white and mottled with black to resemble marble. The tall posts of the frame projected from the walls, stained brown yet rough surfaced with the marks of the broad-ax.

Two rows of many paned windows, the upper at the height of the gallery, provided the only warmth in this large room when the sun was shining.

In 1796, thirty pews were built on platforms along the walls in the gallery. Along the parapet, slip pews accommodated the unmarried part of the audience. After a choir was permitted for the Sabbath services, these singers sat on the slip pew facing the pulpit.

The precentor, or choir leader, with his tuning fork, pitched the tune, yet a harmonious chorus did not result because many persons in the audience never learned the tunes. Still they joined with the singing of the psalms how-

ever disturbing their voices might sound. Not until an instrument was permitted did harmony prevail.

## THE SECOND MINISTER

Worn by his thirty-five years of devoted service, Rev. Nathan Ward resigned in 1798. He was loved by everybody because of his kindness to old and young. He traveled many miles to represent his parish at meetings where the minister was invited, even to distant towns. He maintained standards of righteousness that were indelibly stamped upon the future character of this township.

Now the town was obliged to search for another minister. After a six months interim, Rev. Drury Fairbanks was installed "with the consent of the town and of the church." This young man, twenty-eight years of age, was born in Holliston, Massachusetts, graduated at Brown University in 1797, was married and came to Plymouth in 1800. Among a number of sermons that are in the safe at the Congregational Church is a copy of the ordination discourse that was delivered by Rev. Timothy Dickinson, A.M., pastor of the church in Holliston, on January 8, 1800. Without doubt this service was attended by all of the population who sat in that audience room, with the cold seeping through the walls that were then covered on the outside with boards only.

Mr. Fairbanks remained in Plymouth during the following eighteen years, then removed to Littleton where he died in 1856.

## THE METHODIST PREACHERS

At this same year, 1800, the Methodist circuit riders appeared in this part of the state. Those who are remembered as earnest speakers were Reuben Jones, Martin Ruter and Elijah Hedding, the latter said to have been the popular preacher.

Mr. Ebenezer Blodgett was influenced to become a Methodist and joined in the evangelistic work in surrounding towns at times. He entertained the circuit riders in his home. Mr. Hedding suffered an attack of rheumatic fever on one of his tours and Mr. Blodgett received him in his home and nursed him to health during a three months illness.

## SUMMARY

This decade records the career of Moor Russell, including his store and teamwork to the seacoast, the first bridge over the Pemigewasset River, the new Webster Tavern, completing the interior of the meetinghouse, the first Methodist circuit riders, and the resignation of Rev. Nathan Ward, and Rev. Drury Fairbanks installed as his successor.

# 1803 - 1813

This decade developed signs of progress because of improved transportation facilities and higher education. The turnpike era began about 1796 yet did not bring changes in Plymouth until 1803. With increasing production on the farms, better roads were demanded to transfer these fruits of the soil to markets. Toll roads were the answer. Men formed corporations to finance construction, with legal rights to collect fees from persons who traveled these highways. The name, turnpike, was derived from the toll gates that closed the roadways every few miles and turned on a pike in the gate post.

Seven men, none of them from Plymouth, sought a charter to build a turnpike from West Plymouth toward Franklin, with Peter Mayhew of Rumney as the leader for this enterprise.

Trade with Portsmouth was prosperous, therefore a road toward Boston, the rival city for commerce, was not desired in Plymouth. Both cities were situated on harbors that were deep and safe for sailing ships. Portsmouth was some miles nearer London, but Boston was more central to the increasing population in New England.

Although the inhabitants of Plymouth objected strongly, nevertheless Peter Mayhew was authorized to construct the road and received the honor to perpetuate his name in future years. The Mayhew Turnpike extended from West Plymouth, along the east bank of Newfound Lake, through Bristol and into Hill to a spot about three miles below the mouth of the Smith River.

A toll gate stood at the "Head" near the present home of Mr. Raymond Whittemore where the original granite post for the gate stands, marked 1806, probably the date that the turnpike was opened for business.

Two years later, the Haverhill Turnpike was built from Haverhill, through Piermont, turned along Lake Tarleton, through Warren and Wentworth to join the Mayhew Turnpike at West Plymouth, thus providing an improved highway from these northern towns toward Boston. The Coos Road from Rumney to Haverhill had not remained in passable condition and was almost abandoned after this period.

## THE STAGE COACH ROAD

Today the highway over Thurlow Hill is popular for residents who enjoy

the views of the peaks of the White Mountains. Moses Thurlow came to Plymouth in 1782. His home was "on the old Hill Road to Lower Intervale." Now the name "Stage Coach Road" is revived, reported to be the abandoned pathway that turns off the Daniel Webster Highway on the north bank of Glove Hollow. Traditions exist that stage coaches followed this hill road, over Walker Hill, now called Frontenac, and into Plymouth by Thurlow Street.

The cellar hole of an old tavern can still be seen about half way to the top of the hill from Stoney Brook road.

Stage coaches began to run soon after the turnpikes were incorporated which apparently approximates the period when this old road was constructed.

## THE FRANCONIA NOTCH ROAD

In 1805, the road through Franconia Notch was constructed. Two workmen stopped on the shore of Profile Lake to wash their hands. One looked up at the cliff and discovered the Old Man of the Mountain. Legend tells that the Indians knew about this natural wonder and called it "Holy Ground."

*Stagecoach drivers from left to right are: Ed Cox, Sam Allard, Charles Jones, Wilbur C. Stearns, H. B. Marden, and Abner Nourse—all famous men on their routes.*

Mr. Justus Conrad, historian of Woodstock, reported that the first road from the south to enter Woodstock ran through Sandwich Notch, probably crossed Mad River and over the hill to join the Campton road northward.

From Plymouth, since 1786 when Moses Little received the rights to "The Governor's Farm" that Governor Benning Wentworth claimed from the grant to Campton, without doubt the highway was built in Holderness to his home. That home became the second hospital in Plymouth in 1921. Mr. Little erected a grist mill, a saw mill and a fulling mill at the falls and ferried the Pemigewasset River near his home. By these routes travelers journeyed northward in this decade.

## THE BURNHAM TRIAL

A tragic event brought excitement to the town when the trial of Josiah Burnham was held in the court house at Plymouth. Josiah Burnham was a respected citizen until he became financially embarrassed and was committed to the jail at Haverhill for forgery. Two other prisoners, Russell Freeman and Captain Starkweather, who were confined in the same room with Mr. Burnham, aroused his anger to such a degree of madness that he drew a long knife and killed both men.

At the May term of court in Plymouth in 1806 the murderer was indicted and he was tried in the Superior Court in June. Allen Sprague of Haverhill and Daniel Webster of Boscawen were assigned to defend Mr. Burnham. Mr. Sprague refused to argue in defense of the prisoner. Daniel Webster claimed the privilege and made a plea for mercy of the Court, because he was not in favor of capital punishment.

Biographers claim that this was the first plea that Mr. Webster made for a lawyer's fee, but he lost the case. The judge sentenced the prisoner to be hanged. He was executed at Haverhill on August 12, 1806. As was the custom, a long sermon was delivered by Rev. David Sutherland of Haverhill to warn the prisoner of his impending doom, then he was hanged in the sight of a numerous company of spectators.

The claim that this was the first case that Daniel Webster pleaded in court has been proved untrue. In 1835 after the courthouse was moved to South Main Street and demoted from a schoolhouse to a paint shop, the tale is related that Mr. Webster visited the old building and picked up a paint brush to inscribe his initials upon a post of the framework.

## THE SECOND BRIDGE

A freshet, as floods were named, washed the first bridge over the Pemigewasset River down the stream in 1804. The elder son of Judge Livermore,

Edward St. Loe, applied for a franchise to run a ferry "Near where the toll bridge was lately erected." Again, in 1810, the younger son, Arthur, was granted by the legislature the exclusive right to keep a toll bridge over the Pemigewasset River. A second bridge was constructed, only to be washed away by the flood of 1813, said to have been unusually dangerous.

## THE COMPLETED MEETINGHOUSE

Fourteen years after the town voted to erect the second meetinghouse, the building was finished on the outside in 1806 The boarded walls were covered with clapboards and painted.

In that same year, the town voted that a belfry might be erected above the porch over the west doorway, "without expense to the town." A subscription paper was circulated that pledged sufficient contributions for this addition.

In Stearns' History of Plymouth may be seen a rude drawing of this meetinghouse that seems a most unlikely representation. At this period, carpenters constructed a belfry on the ground, this one completed with an "electric rod" at the apex. With tackle and shears the structure was raised to the height of the porch, fastened to a platform with mortises and tenons and firmly pinned together to resist the winds that blow with force on the top of Ward Hill.

A year before the meetinghouse was finished, Rev. Nathan Ward died. He was laid to rest in a new cemetery, now named the Pleasant Valley Cemetery. Although no records remain, doubtless the original cemetery near the log meetinghouse was abandoned after this burned.

The second cemetery in the town is found on the Spencer Farm at the edge of the terrace along the flood plain of the Baker River. The oldest headstone at the grave of Widow Bridget Snow, another for a Revolutionary soldier and several other moss-covered slabs indicate that this was the burial ground for residents of West Plymouth.

## HOLMES PLYMOUTH ACADEMY

The thirteenth academy in New Hampshire was chartered in Plymouth in 1808. When Samuel Holmes of Campton was informed about the plans, although his home was in Campton, he gave $500.00 toward the foundation and was honored when the school was known by his name.

Academies were private secondary schools that depended for their maintenance upon the tuition that was received from the pupils. Usually the Board of Trustees selected the principal who must depend for his salary upon the number of students who enrolled—a test of his popularity.

Twenty-six citizens of Plymouth and surrounding towns signed a petition to the General Court for incorporation of a "Public School for the benefit of the rising generation." Colonel Holmes, Arthur Livermore, John Rogers and four clergymen were appointed to the Board of Trustees.

No records about the history during its beginning years remain. That a building was occupied seems to be proved by the fact that a bill of twenty-five dollars for repairs was approved by the trustees for the academy building. If students enrolled, no list of their names remains, neither are any names of a faculty preserved. Not until 1822 was a record found about the Board of Trustees or the name of a principal mentioned.

## THE WAR OF 1812

Towns in the interior of New Hampshire were hardly disturbed by this war that concerned navigation problems. Since some danger of an invasion from Canada threatened, a company was sent to guard the northern frontier. The state militia was alerted to be ready to proceed to Portsmouth since British ships were sailing along the coast. Not more than a dozen men from Plymouth saw service in either section.

Plymouth was approaching its half century birthday. Prosperity was changing the trend of progress. New homes were arising along the Rumney Road, the usual name for the street in that direction.

On Ward Hill, Isaac Stafford was a new arrival. In 1804, he erected the house at 150 Highland Street, now owned by Mrs. Frank Foster, soon married the youngest child of Nathan Ward and became a prosperous citizen.

Enoch Ward, Jr., began to build several two story houses on Highland Street. Moor Russell was enlarging his home.

This was the period when the priceless antique furniture of the present was being hand-made by patient craftsmen. An example is the lyre table now in the chancel of the Congregational church, carved by Enoch Ward at a price of two pounds for the communion table of the Ward Hill meetinghouse. The Boston Rocker, ladder back chairs and spool beds were designs by New England's craftsmen. The latter should recall the hours that children were taught to turn the cranks of the lathes while their father held the blade that carved the grooves in the wood that are supposed to imitate spools. The belts for the cranks were not endless. After the belt was wound to its end, back the wheel must turn to begin its work over again. Finally, treadles were devised to run the motive power by the foot of the operator.

Hard maple, solid oak or mahogany were the materials. Craftsmen looked for curly or bird's eye maple logs as they cut their firewood. Mahogany

was imported, also rosewood and walnut not grown in New England. Black walnut became popular especially for bedroom furniture and the carved frames for parlor furniture with the hair cloth coverings.

Coin silver spoons were the proud possession of brides. Prosperous families purchased pewter platters and goblets. The wealthy proudly displayed their imported silver tea services of many designs and varied pieces. China, brought home from voyages around the world by the sea captains, and Chelsea and Minton porcelains from England are sought at auctions today. The homespun garments became everyday wear. Silks and satins, brocades and fine woolens were imported along with dolls that were dressed to illustrate the styles of European designers. Even these remote villages received these innovations as proved by silhouettes preserved by descendants today.

Spinsters were learning the art of making fine yarns, dyeing them with native dyes made from vegetables and plants of the wild. Weavers on their kitchen looms learned the methods of setting the warp to produce the coverlets that are priceless heirlooms today. "Windows and Doors, Weaver's Rose, Indian Wars, and Double Bow-Knot" were skills that weavers displayed. Flax was grown, cured and spun on the flax wheels in many homes to weave the bed linens, towels of many designs and table linen that endures to this day. Cotton thread in skeins was purchased to weave for domestic uses. Warm wool blankets became the pride of every housewife.

Brick yards were busy. Several houses remain today whose walls are made of this native brick. Apparently the deposit of clay near Loon Pond provided the greater amount although at the wading-place on the Baker River bank another supply was excavated.

Records of the early process show that since clay retains considerable moisture, it was necessary to dig a supply and spread a thin layer where the sun would evaporate the water.

After this dried clay was pulverized by tramping it by men or cattle and the pebbles were removed, it was shoveled into a pit in layers of ninety per cent clay to ten per cent of sand. Water was added and then this mixture was allowed to set until it slacked, as did lime.

Then a "pug-mill" mixed the clay and sand. This mill was a large container or bin equipped with paddles that were turned with a sweep by horse power. A workman, called a "striker," tossed balls of this mixture into wooden molds that were divided into sections the size of a brick and soaked in water which gave the name, "water-struck" because the striker pressed the surplus wet clay off the top of the wet molds. These were spread in the sun to dry until the bricks would slip easily from the molds.

—G. G. Clark

*This is a brickyard in Plymouth. A workman has a mold for bricks in his hands. There are two pug-mills with horses fastened to the sweeps. Lines of bricks are spread to dry in the sun, and a stack of bricks is prepared for baking. In the rear, the kilns are almost concealed by smoke from wood fires.*

Now the bricks were ready to fire or bake in sheds with thick walls to retain the heat. Furnaces at ground level for wood fires were constructed with flues to carry the hot air to circulate among the stacks of soft bricks.

The fires slowly heated the bricks for about a week. Then the temperature was increased to 1850 degrees during two days, then gradually decreased until the roof of the kiln could be removed and the bricks allowed to cool. The stacks in the center of the kiln often turned black from over baking while those near the shed walls might be insufficiently baked. Ancient fireplaces were often intentionally built with a mixture of the red and the black bricks. No artificial coloring was employed, only the heat from wood fires produced the deep red bricks.

Lump lime and sand was the mortar to build fireplaces and chimneys. When these fall apart today, this cement does not cling to the brick. A demand for these hand-made bricks is brisk at present to repair the old fireplaces in restored colonial homesteads, since these are smaller in dimensions and a different shade of red. A brick yard remained in operation in West Plymouth until near the end of the nineteenth century.

## THE SOCIAL LIBRARY

Libraries that were supported by generous citizens were established in many towns during this decade. Plymouth kept up-to-date with the Plymouth Social Library, owned and managed by Col. David Webster, Moor Russell, Rev. Drury Fairbanks, William Webster, Dr. John Rogers, Samuel Wells, James Little and John Porter, Esq. In the law of incorporation, the owners were permited to receive donations of not over one thousand dollars annually. The general public was not permitted to enjoy the use of the contents and the books were in a private house.

## SUMMARY

This decade included the Mayhew Turnpike and Franconia Notch Road, the second bridge over the Pemigewasset River, the Burnham Trial, Finishing the Second Meetinghouse, Founding the Holmes Plymouth Academy and the War of 1812, with notes of progress in new houses and native crafts.

*Elms for potash along the road to Rumney that "saved the Revolution." (See page 17.)*

# 1813 - 1823

## STAGE COACHES

Turnpikes were extending their lines in all directions throughout the state. The inhabitants in the northern towns were demanding public transportation to Boston, certainly an innovation of supreme importance.

Accordingly a stage coach route, promoted in Plymouth by Col. David Webster, his son, William, Moor Russell and Jabes Hatch Weld, was established by Robert Morse of West Rumney in 1814. Soon Mr. Morse became the sole proprietor of all of the stage routes in Grafton County. Two and three seated wagons were used and Peabody, Stephen and Thomas, sons of Mr. Morse, were the drivers.

Two years later a contract was arranged to carry mail by stage from Concord to Plymouth, with Simon Harris of Bridgewater leaving Concord every Tuesday to arrive in Plymouth at 11 A.M. on Wednesday and returning at Concord by 6 P.M. on Thursday. Relays of horses were maintained at taverns along the route.

Another mail line ran from Portsmouth to Haverhill through Plymouth, by the Coos Turnpike that passed the tavern of Col. William Tarleton that stood on the shore of the lake that honors his name today.

Stage drivers became popular among the housewives along their routes. They kindly delivered parcels, stopped in the cities to shop for every article that was ordered, yet best of all, they brought the news from town to town. Postage on a letter was six cents for ten miles, increasing to twenty-five cents for four hundred miles and more.

## THE STARVING YEAR

Thoughout New Hampshire, the year 1816 was remembered as the Starving Year because the temperature was unusually cold. In this vicinity, with the exception of July, killing frost occurred in the other eleven months. In June a foot of snow fell and snow covered the ground in the last of August. Crops were planted and frozen repeatedly. When a few plants survived, by covering them when necessary, a small quantity of potatoes and rye might be grown. Corn or grain became so scarce that even the seed that was supposed

to be saved constantly was consumed. Every section of the state has preserved tales about the hardships of 1816.

In this vicinity the name, Christian Hill, commemorates the generosity of Reuben Whitten. By some natural contour of the hill, the frost did not smite a field of grain. Forty bushels were harvested and dried before the fireplace.

The winter was so severe that cattle froze and game disappeared. Each week, Mr. Whitten gave sufficient wheat to his neighbors to prevent starvation, refusing to accept money from any of them.

In later years a monument was raised on his farm above the village of Ashland to perpetuate the name of Reuben Whitten and to express gratitude by calling the site Christian Hill.

## MERRILL'S GAZETTEER

During the year 1817, Eliphalet Merrill of Northwood, N.H. published a leatherbound book of 225 pages, about five by eight inches in size, "The Gazetteer of the State of New Hampshire." The author stated in his preface that his information about the towns was obtained from letters to men "of the best information in every township."

For Plymouth he stated in part, "In the northeast part (of the town) is a pleasant village containing about twenty-two dwelling-houses, a meeting-house, court-house, four stores and a distillery. In this town are also four mills & c." In 1810 the town contained 937 inhabitants. In 1812, the number of polls was 160 and taxes were $4.80 per thousand. There were owned 184 horses, 128 oxen, 297 cows, 822 cattle between two and four years old, and 2000 sheep. Also noted, "on the 27th of November, 1814, a severe earthquake shock was felt about seven o'clock in the evening. The spotted fever raged very extensively in many parts of the state." An item in the Stearns History states, "March 8, 1814, Died in Plymouth, Dr. John Rogers of the same fever," an indication that this village did not escape.

The names of the twenty-two owners of dwelling-houses were three Ward Families, Isaac Stafford, Joseph F. Cummings, Peter McQuestin, a blacksmith, and a Dearborn who built a brick house on Ward Hill. On Highland Street, lived Enoch Ward, Moor Russell, Nathan Harris at number 38 of today, two Ward houses at numbers 60 and 78, and the house at number 47, perhaps occupied by Noah Cummings. On Main Street were Stephen Webster, William Webster, Jabes Hatch Weld, and Dr. John Rogers in one of the two houses that he owned. John Willoughby and Jacob Merrill repaired clocks and watches somewhere in the village.

The four stores listed were Weld, Russell, Harris and Isaac Ward. The distillery seems to have been forgotten. The four mills were grist and saw mills in West Plymouth and the Lower Intervale.

## MILITARY AFFAIRS

After the Revolution, the state reorganized its forces. The veterans in Plymouth were included in a new Fourteenth regiment. "Training bands" composed of young men and an alarm list of men over forty years of age but under seventy were organized in every town with officers of the rank of captain only. Celebrations were gala days when the veterans paraded and the fifes and drums furnished martial music.

A revision of the laws in 1816 restored the officers of the rank of Colonel, Lieutenant Colonel and Major, possibly because the War of 1812 demonstrated that a trained militia should be in readiness for emergencies. Muster Day in the spring and training maneuvers in the fall became popular events that perpetuated the patriotic spirit. Several level fields on the intervale in Plymouth and Holderness and in Campton are areas that are remembered as Muster Fields.

If cook-books of that period are consulted, the recipe for Muster Ginger Bread will be found. This was a thin cake, cut into rectangles, three by six inches in size, sweetened with molasses and flavored with ginger that vendors sold in quantities among the crowds.

In Stearns' History may be read the lists of the officers in Plymouth who served until the militia was suspended in 1851.

## THE TOLERATION ACT

A radical change in religious laws caused consternation in 1819 among the denominations. Throughout the years since the dissenters to the sermons that Rev. Ward delivered were excused from paying their minister's tax in 1775, this custom became so widespread that the people who belonged to the "Standing Order", actually the Congregational Denomination, were hard pressed to provide sufficient taxes to meet the salary of the minister for the town.

A bill was introduced into the legislature in 1819 to eliminate this tax in all of the townships. After this bill was enacted into law, to compensate for the loss of this minister's tax, a new law permitted denominations to organize "societies" which were legally allowed to tax persons who voluntarily became members of these societies in order to meet the financial obligations of the churches.

The Congregational Church in Plymouth immediately formed a society

in June of 1819. Its list of members included many persons who were unwilling to become members of the church, yet desired to promote the work of the church. As other financial plans evolved, the members disbanded this society in 1957.

## THE METHODIST DENOMINATION

The circuit riders since 1800 had pursued their dedicated mission to spread their tenets throughout Grafton County. In Plymouth, Ebenezer Blodgett was the most active member with scores of Methodists attending services on the Sabbath.

After twenty-three years, a brick church was erected on the Yeaton Road not far from the residence of Ebenezer Blodgett, that accommodated an audience of three hundred persons. The Methodist denomination now surpassed the attendance in the meetinghouse on Ward Hill.

No permanent clergyman was assigned by the Conference in 1823 or in the next decade, instead Plymouth shared the ministers with surrounding towns. The name, Methodist Episcopal, pleased Squire Samuel Livermore of Holderness, who regarded the denomination as "first cousins" in relationship to the Trinity Episcopal Church with its chapel that still remains near the Holderness School. The brick church continued to be open for Sabbath services until 1865 although the Methodist denomination established a church on the Main Street in Plymouth Village.

## THE OLD BRICK

The title, "The Old Brick," was acquired from the year 1822 when Moor Russell erected a two story brick store on the site of the United States Post Office of 1963. Two sons, David and William, became clerks to learn the business. Prosperity guided this enterprise until the merchandise included every commodity that the community desired—truly a general store in the country.

Between 1820 and the following five years, the Russell home was enlarged with the brick, two story structure that stands on Highland Street in 1963. The interior preserves the traditions of workmanship from the foundations in the cellar beneath the fireplaces to the queen post frame in the attic. The unsupported staircase is one of few in the northern section of New Hampshire. Specialists in such construction were employed and the folklore of the past is that, if the owner paid the bill immediately, the builder inserted an ivory disk within the top of the newel post, as may be found in the Russell staircase.

The mantels of the three fireplaces are unpretentious yet artistic. The shutters for the windows, inside of the wide brick walls, and the front doorway are truly New England designs. The kitchen of 1797 or earlier remains a

*The Old Brick, Moor Russell's Store, 1822, at the corner of Highland and Main Streets, razed for the site of the post office in 1936.*

valued example of an old brick fireplace and a special heater for water that fortunately is preserved today.

This homestead must have been a busy household with eleven boys and girls growing to become distinguished men and women. The daughters married professional men, one the President of Vassar College, two married eminent doctors and the sons followed their father in several lines of merchandising or brokerage. The family name has disappeared from Plymouth and the mother's maiden name of Webster also. At this two century anniversary the memory of these founders of Plymouth should be recalled with veneration.

## THE COURT HOUSE

The terrace between Highland and Court Street presented considerable activity with the Brick store and a new County Courthouse under construction in 1823. The entire section was a vacant, tree covered hillside, the northern limit of Col. David Webster's original acres. The aged pioneer had surrendered his property to his second son, William, and he died within a few months on May 8, 1824.

The County of Grafton no longer found the courthouse of 1774 adequate for its business. Now a jury room for conference, another for consultation

between clients and lawyers, and a third where the legal profession might meet, in addition to the courtroom, became necessary. Early in the year 1823 the County voted to erect a new courthouse.

The land was purchased from William Webster and he and David Moor Russell were the contractors. The brick was supplied by Eli Pike who lived on Pike Hill, west of Ward Hill. Before the end of the year, on the site of the present courthouse stood a building designed according to that period resembling a Greek temple. The walls were two stories high and the gable roof extended in front above a porch that was supported by four fluted Doric columns, painted white. Around the entire building was a wooden friese with dentile pattern at the eaves, also painted white.

Above the roof, set back so that it was supported by the front brick wall, was a belfry, its lantern octagonal in shape with its eight windows covered by green blinds. The finish of the top was a "dish-cover" design that resembled in shape the semi-circular cover-tops of porcelain sugar bowls, with eight carved panels beneath this dome-top. The belfry and the triangular wooden fill of the front gable were painted white as were the frames of the four small-paned windows on either side of the building.

Judge Arthur Livermore reported to the Court of Sessions of Grafton County that he had inspected this structure and found that the contractors had faithfully performed their work.

One innovation demands special mention. The contractors were instructed to build two chimneys of brick, protruding through the roof, "to admit a stove pipe." This marks the beginning of the use of stoves in public buildings.

Another addition that was introduced in 1849 was a bell in the belfry used to open court with its summons. The trade mark around the top of the barrel reads, "Henry N. Hooper & Co. Boston, 1849. No. 317." This company purchased the foundry of Joseph Revere, the son of Paul Revere who succeeded his father in the business of casting bells.

## SUMMARY

This decade included the Stage Coach Lines, The Starving Year, Data in Merrill's Gazetteer, Military Affairs, The Toleration Act, The Beginning of the Methodist Denomination, Building "The Old Brick" Store and the New Court House on Main Street.

*Left to right: Thompson's Law Office, (1830), Congregational Church (1836), Courthouse (1823) and Holmes-Plymouth Academy (1835).*

# 1823-1833

This decade is distinguished by several improvements of importance to everybody. A noteworthy introduction to more comfortable existence was the transition from fireplaces to iron stoves.

Records prove that in 1823 a stove was installed in the meetinghouse on Ward Hill. Possibly the town did not purchase this new convenience, since taxes were not allowed for the fuel. The following year, the wardens of the Society, the organization that the Congregational Church maintained since 1819, voted to "take care of the meetinghouse and see that the stove was supported with fuel and tended." The expense for wood was $2.50 and to pay the janitor the bill was $2.00. Evidently wood was surplus property in 1823.

## THE PAUL REVERE BELL

A second action was circulating a subscription paper to purchase a Revere bell to install in the belfry of the meetinghouse. Contributions varied from fifty cents to twenty dollars. The stock books of the Paul Revere & Sons Foundry in Boston record "Plymouth, October 26, 1827. Number 373, weight 932 pounds." The entire expense was $382.27.

The bell was hung on November 12, 1827. The custom of tolling the bell was immediately practiced at the death of Mrs. Samuel Emerson, the wife of the Chief Justice of the Superior Court, on November 23, 1827. One night in that winter the community was startled to hear the bell ringing an alarm, because the Alvah McQuesten house had caught fire.

Nobody remembers when or why this bell disappeared. One tale exists that the metal cracked and was sent to the George H. Holbrook Bell Company of East Medway, Massachusetts to be cast with additional metal in the bell that now hangs in the belfry of the Congregational Church, dated 1834. Another story relates that the bell was sold when the meetinghouse was transferred to the bank of Beebe River in Campton to become the framework of a saw mill. There the bell hung until fire consumed the mill and melted the bell, according to a memory in Campton.

## THE THIRD BRIDGE

A most important event was the organization of a corporation to construct a third bridge over the Pemigewasset River between Plymouth and

Holderness. On December 16, 1824, an act was passed by the legislature: "Granting to Phineas Walker, Josiah Quincy, William Webster, Arthur Livermore, Nathaniel Peabody Rogers and Associates the exclusive right to building, repairing, rebuilding, and keeping a toll bridge across the Pemigewasset River between Holderness and Plymouth where Cochran's ferry, so called, is." Since Edward St. Loe Livermore, to whom the franchise for a ferry was granted, had removed from Holderness, evidently he transferred his rights to another ferryman, possibly of Holderness.

These men were incorporated "by the name of The Proprietors of Pont Fayette." At this date, the Marquis de Lafayette was visiting this country with honors bestowed upon him because of his military and financial aid during the American Revolution.

The highest mountain in the Franconia Range, called "Big Haystack," was christened Mount Lafayette with appropriate ceremonies on October 17, 1824. The Marquis visited Concord on June 25, 1825. A folk tale states that he came to Holderness to stay the night at the residence of Squire Samuel Livermore, a somewhat doubtful rumor since Judge Livermore died in 1803.

The bridge honored this French nobleman by perpetuating his name through the following century although variations were used such as Pont LaFayette, and Pont Lafayette Bridge and The Lafayette Bridge.

After the Superintendent, "Major" Russell, and Captain Pecker, the architect, had completed the bridge, the selectmen of Plymouth were instructed that "a highway be laid out between the Main Road leading from the Court House to Baker River Bridge and to the bridge called Pont Fayette lately erected over the Pemigewasset River having its center of its present traveled path."

The selectmen made the layout and "assessed" the damages accruing to Arthur Livermore "the owner of said land through which the road is laid out" at the sum of forty dollars. At the following town meeting this order was rescinded because this bridge was still owned by a private corporation for private profit. Evidently the town of Plymouth did not intend to maintain the approach to the bridge.

The bridge was constructed with its width twenty-two feet and its length 278 feet. Near the middle of the bed of the river a stone pier supported the framework. On the southern edge of the highway, at the Plymouth end, a toll house was erected that stood during many years.

This was the period when covers were being built over the floors of bridges. There is a conjecture that Pont Fayette was a covered bridge.

The proprietors of the charter, with one exception, William Webster, were lawyers. Phineas Walker came to Plymouth in 1794, the same year that

he was admitted to the Bar in Grafton County. He was appointed judge of probate in 1823 and served the following eight years. He removed to Newport, Maine in 1835. He married the sister of Jabez Hatch Weld.

Arthur Livermore was the younger son of Squire Samuel Livermore, now a successful lawyer at sixty years of age. He sold his property in Holderness and purchased the house and lands that belonged to James Little about this time, known today as Livermore Falls.

Josiah Quincy was a young lawyer living in Rumney. He married Mary Grace Weld, the daughter of Jabez Hatch Weld. His career was in its beginning at this time.

Nathaniel Peabody Rogers was the son of Dr. John Rogers and Nancy Russell, the daughter of Moor Russell. He graduated from Dartmouth College in 1816, was admitted to the Bar in 1819 and opened his law office in Plymouth.

After five years, these five proprietors sold their rights to Attorney William C. Thompson of Plymouth who sold the bridge to the Town of Plymouth in 1843.

A regulation prevailed that to drive over this structure at a speed "faster than a walk" would cause the driver to pay a fine of several cents.

## THE ROGERS RESIDENCE

No house in Plymouth acquired greater fame than the home of Nathaniel Peabody Rogers that he erected on Main Street in 1825. The house was razed by Plymouth Teachers College in 1958 to provide a lot upon which to erect the gymnasium. This young lawyer, mentioned as one of the Proprietors of the corporation for Pont Fayette, was the son of the successful line of physicians in the town and Nancy Russell, daughter of the merchant, Moor Russell. He was admitted to the Bar in 1819, married the daughter of Judge Daniel Farand of Burlington, Vermont in 1822, and opened his office in Plymouth.

His new home was of brick, and designed for cultured living. Situated upon a rise of ground, the view was across the Pemigewasset River to Mount Prospect. The rooms were spacious with ornamental fireplace mantels, and staircase. A two story ell and large stable were at the rear. The grounds were landscaped with a curved drive and shaded by tall trees.

In this home eight children were born, four sons who were distinguished in life in business and professional positions, and four daughters who became musicians of ability with both vocal and instrumental skills.

This home was the center of hospitality. The poet, John Greenleaf Whittier, and Lucy Larcomb often visited there and after Mr. Rogers sponsored the cause of anti-slavery, he entertained national advocates of freedom.

*The Thompson Building in 1825. The State Bank occupied the front room on the left. This building later became Little's Hotel and was razed by Amos M. Kidder in 1888.*

Many memories remain about the secret closet that he arranged to conceal the run-away slaves on their way to Canada. He is said to have sheltered a fugitive in his personal sleeping room when necessary.

The house was sold to James McQuesten after Mr. Rogers removed to Concord and was inherited by his daughter who married Cyrus Sargent, a successful businessman of Boston. Gradually the house was neglected and its final occupant was the daughter of the Sargent Family who married abroad and returned to her former home to escape from enemies during World War II.

In brief outline, the history of this famous homestead remains but a memory of a century that brought tragedies to this quiet village.

## THE GRAFTON JOURNAL

The first newspaper in Plymouth had a brief existence. Henry Eaton Moore came to Plymouth from Andover, the twenty-one-year-old son of Dr. Jacob R. Moore. He opened a printing business about in the location of the drug store at the corner of Main and Highland Streets. He advertised a book store and a circulating library, in addition to printing and binding.

On January 1, 1825 he began the publication of "The Grafton Journal," a four page sheet 13X20 inches in size. In September of the following year the business moved to Concord. Mr. Moore became a teacher of music, and also published a number of books with musical titles.

## THE PEMIGEWASSET BANK

An indication that business was prospering in the town is confirmed by the fact that a State Bank was incorporated on July 2, 1825. Thirteen business and professional men of Plymouth and surrounding towns joined the corporation.

The Charter was limited to twenty years, the usual period in New Hampshire. The capital stock was $50,000.

On the east side of Main Street, about opposite Court Street, a new brick building was erected. Here William Cooms Thompson, a young lawyer, opened his office. The bank was established in the same building with Mr. Thompson as its first cashier.

Mr. Thompson was born at Salisbury in 1802, graduated from Dartmouse College, and advanced to become a lawyer of marked ability and a prominent citizen of Plymouth. After two years he resigned his position as cashier to devote his entire time to his practice of law.

Arthur Livermore was the first President, followed by Daniel Smith and William Webster, before the bank closed at the expiration of its Charter.

William Green of Concord succeeded Mr. Thompson as cashier. He was a

prominent citizen both at the bank and in the religious community. He moved to Bristol when the bank closed.

## THE METHODIST CHURCH

A third addition to Main Street was the first church building to be erected in the center of the village. The Methodist denomination began to assemble in a hall on Highland Street, probably in the second story of the building that was occupied by the store of Nathan Harris at the corner of Langdon and Highland Streets.

Their church was erected in 1833 after Rev. William Nelson was appointed the first stated preacher for the Methodists in the village in 1831. This church stood somewhat north of the present Record Office building, was of wood construction, and was built at an expense of about $1000.00.

Special mention should be given to Rev. William Nelson whom age compelled to retire in 1835 to a farm, now isolated upon a hillside road that branches off the route to Newfound Lake, although the place is within the limits of Plymouth.

Mr. Nelson was a capable citizen both in town and in school affairs. He served four terms as a selectman after his retirement in the church. Also he was elected to the legislature to represent Plymouth in 1836. He substituted in the pulpit until his death in 1859.

His twelve children became teachers, physicians and several were clergymen. His daughter, Eliza, married Hon. Henry W. Blair of Campton, senator in the United States Congress. Mrs. Blair was one of the well known women in New Hampshire. Her novel, *'Lizabeth Wilson* was published in 1895. The story describes the prejudice between the Methodist and Congregational denominations in the period of the circuit riders. A copy is preserved in the Plymouth Town Library. The description of Rev. Nathan Ward is excellent reading.

## THE CONCORD STAGECOACH

A discovery that changed the mode of traveling and attracted tourists into the Pemigewasset Valley was the Concord Stagecoach in 1827. A genius named Lewis Downing of Concord invented the tough leather thorough-brace that served for a spring to support the body of the coach. At this time these coaches were pronounced "the only perfect vehicle for traveling that had ever been built."

Although the highways were rough and dusty, nevertheless passengers crowded both the seats within and on the top of the coach.

Among the stage drivers, the most famous in Plymouth was James Fogg Langdon, the first member of this distinguished family to introduce the name

*Abbot, Downing stagecoach, 1827*

into the population of the town. He and his wife, Rhoda, who usually accompanied him on his trips between Haverhill and Concord, became prominent residents in Plymouth. Mr. Langdon was "Uncle Jim" to everybody.

Mr. Langdon acquired ownership of the stagecoach lines through Franconia Notch to Stanstead, P.Q., also from Dover to Concord. Delivering parcels became a steady business that developed into an express company. Nathaniel White of Concord and Benjamin P. Cheney of Peterboro with Mr. Langdon established the Cheney Express between Boston and Montreal that was sold to the American Express company.

Mr. and Mrs. Langdon were staunch Universalists who contributed generously to build the church of that denomination in Plymouth.

Tales from the taverns along the turnpikes described how the six or eight horses whirled the coaches to a stop before the doorways. Names of drivers to be remembered are James Langdon of Plymouth, Edmund K. Cox of Holderness, Arthur E. White of North Woodstock and Eugene Bowles of Franconia.

## REV. GEORGE PUNCHARD

Rev. Jonathan Ward, the son of Rev. Nathan Ward, completed his eleven years of service as minister of the Town of Plymouth in 1829. After an interim of six months, the Congregational Church employed Rev. George Punchard of Salem, Massachusetts as pastor.

Here was a young man, fresh from Dartmouth College and Andover Theological seminary, full of enthusiasm and energy. He infused his spirit into his parish and the entire community. With his inspiration he conducted a three day evangelistic revival that added over fifty members to his church.

Since 1825 the trustees of Holmes Plymouth Academy had been attempt-

ing to renew the sessions. A meeting of the trustees was called at William Webster's tavern. Several new trustees were appointed and repairs to the building were voted. One of the trustees was authorized to employ a student from Dartmouth. Samuel A. Burns of Rumney accepted the position of principal at a salary of $350.00 for one year. In the succeeding years three other men filled the position of principal without attracting enough pupils to continue the school. Such was the condition when Mr. Punchard arrived in Plymouth, 1833.

## SUMMARY

Stoves were introduced, a bell hung in the meetinghouse, a third bridge constructed over the Pemigewasset River, the Grafton Journal published about two years, the Pemigewasset State Bank established, the Methodist Church, N. P. Rogers residence and another brick building erected on Main Street, Mr. Arthur Livermore removed to Livermore Falls from Holderness, Concord Coach stage lines established through Franconia Notch and between Haverhill and Concord and Dover, Rev. George Punchard, a young minister, was employed by the Congregational Church, Rev. William Nelson first appointed Methodist minister for Plymouth.

—W. Edward White

*Willis Martin hauling logs with a snow-drag or skids on the Tory Farm —a forgotten scene of a past generation. (See page 144, another forgotten picture, an ox-sled.)*

# 1833 - 1843

## POTTERIES

Two industries developed within this decade that brought prosperity to Plymouth: Potteries and Plymouth Buck Gloves.

Doubtless the idea of manufacturing pottery was generated from the brick yards, especially those along the Coos Road in West Plymouth.

The first pottery was set up by Peter Flanders of Concord. He was a stage driver between Concord and Haverhill. Next, he was the tavern keeper at the "Head" of the Mayhew Turnpike in West Plymouth. One conjectures that the trips through Boscawen, where pottery was then produced, may have planted the idea in the mind of Mr. Flanders when he passed the brick yards on his weekly trips in the stage.

He began to produce pottery in 1816, on the lot just north of his tavern, about opposite the two story brick house formerly occupied by Mrs. W. H. Cummings. This house was built from the small, water-struck brick in 1835 by a stage driver named Adams. A small wooden building across the road is said to have been the old pottery.

Within the following half-century, this pottery was continued by Peter and his son, George, until 1867. The daughter of Peter Flanders married Mr. Alexander G. Smythe, who were the parents of the late Mrs. Blanche Smythe Smith, long associated with banking in Plymouth.

The Gill Family of Boscawen were famous potters. Seven years after Peter Flanders began the business, William Gill arrived to establish his pottery on the farm that he purchased from Peter Webster, known as the "Pem Farm." There beside the sharp curve on the road that turns off Route 25 toward the approach to the Smith Covered Bridge, William Gill and his son, John, made pottery. Later, William Webster and his son, John, continued this business until 1897.

Unfortunately, these potters did not imprint a trade mark upon their so called "Brown Ware." In consequence, only a few pieces can be identified with the name of the manufacturer.

A third brick yard flourished beside the Yeaton Road near the abandoned, dirt road that turns into the field toward the south, where a pile of the residue of this yard may be found today.

—Doris W. Wherland

*These specimens of Plymouth pottery are from the collection that Mr. George G. Clark willed to the Library Association. The information is copied from slips of paper within the pieces, in the handwriting of Mr. Clark.*

The only specimen of the actual size of household utensils is the large jar at the center back of the above picture. This is unglazed clay, light tan in color. All other pieces are miniatures for samples that salesmen carried from house to house to solicit orders.

Directly in front of this jar stands a "wide-mouth bottle by John H. Gill near Smith bridge, 1850," and probably shows "the Gill Glaze." This is dark brown and very glossy. To the right is a brown, covered bean-pot, also by Gill. At the left front is a small, brown basin, a miniature of many sizes for mixing bowls, milk pans and all flaring dishes.

The rum ring on the left is a fine specimen by Peter Flanders. It is mottled brown and yellow, well glazed, with a firm base the size of a man's arm. The larger ring is gray in color with a fernlike pattern in dark blue. The two-handled vase is by Flanders. William Webster is the potter for the small sample jug and the small pitcher.

At the right front is a most interesting shaving mug, potter unknown. A small cup is attached to the side for the soap. The handle is well shaped.

In storage are many jars that are of one or two gallon size and many more interesting pieces, waiting until a museum is erected to display these valuable antiques.

Later a pottery was there that facetiously gave the name of "China Street" to the road. According to the word of the late Mr. George Clark, a number of the pieces of pottery in his collection were made and glazed on China Street. One regrets that Mr. Clark did not identify the name of the manufacturer on these specimens.

The early mechanism consisted of two wooden disks about two feet in diameter and two inches thick, both attached to an axle, and the whole resembling a pedestal table. The upper disk or potter's wheel was set upon the top of the axle. The other disk, about thirty inches below, was attached to the axle by a sprocket device called the "kick wheel" that sat about six inches above the floor into which the axle was firmly fastened, upright.

The potter sat or stood beside the wheels with his foot on the kick wheel. Upon the upper disk he placed a ball of moist clay. With his foot he turned the wheels while his fingers pressed the clay outward from the center of the ball, higher and higher, while the whirl of the wheels turned the clay into a hollow circular vessel with its base set on the potter's wheel. The sides or walls were shaped as the potter's fingers worked and the surplus clay was cut from the top.

The moist vessel was left to dry for several hours. If a handle was tc be attached, this was shaped and dried, then fastened in place before the vessel was set into an oven or kiln to bake.

To render the porous vessel moisture proof, a glaze was necessary on the inner surface. The early salt glaze was formed by first heating the vessel then tossing salt over its interior that spread with the heat to form a glossy covering that prevented moisture from seeping through the clay.

What a boon to housewives these milkpans, bean pots, pudding dishes, and tall jars for liquids became, although their weight was considerable. Experience designed jugs, bottles, plates and mugs.

Possibly the rum ring was the most difficult article to shape. This hollow circle about two inches in diameter was curled into a ring that a workman wore about his arm. An opening in the side admitted liquids. When a drink was desired, the stopper was removed, the opening raised to the lips and thirst was quenched. A well glazed ring brings many ten dollar bills to antique dealers today.

Miniatures are collecters' items, relics of samples that salesmen carried to solicit orders. The tin pedlars ended the demand for pottery eventually.

## PLYMOUTH BUCK GLOVES

The second industry that spread the name of Plymouth far and wide honors the name of Alvah McQuesten whose patient research created the

*The Alvah McQuesten Home, 1790 – 1963, at Ward Hill.*

Plymouth Buck Glove industry. The McQuesten Family of Scotch-Irish ancestry settled in Litchfield in 1735 and moved to Plymouth in 1790. Their home was at 100 Highland Street, known as the Mary Walker house.

Alvah McQuesten was born in Plymouth in 1797. At the age of sixteen he was left fatherless with six younger brothers and sisters. Possibly he learned to be a tanner from Samuel Dearborn who ran a tannery about on the site of the barn belonging to Dr. Learned.

In his tanyard, at the foot of Ward Hill beside a brook that furnished the supply of water, he ground hemlock bark to soak in vats to produce a bath in which hides were immersed until the hair loosened and could be removed. Then the skins were dried and processed to become leather of various names and grades.

When Mr. McQuesten attempted to process deer skins the product was hard, and the surface crackled and wrinkled. After many experiments, by trial and error, a method of dressing the deer hides, by rubbing oil into the tanned skins, rendered them soft and durable. Thus the stock for the famous Plymouth Buck Gloves was discovered and promoted.

During the years between 1835 and 1870, at least twenty small plants manufactured gloves and mittens or dressed deer skins for sale. Jason C.

Draper established a tanyard on the Glove Hollow Brook about 1835 and began the glove business. One dilapidated small building now beside the brook was the shop of Thomas F. and David Glynn in Glove Hollow. Other shops were operated in homes or in second story rooms above the stores along Main Street.

A person over eighty years of age describes watching a skilled workman dress and polish a deer skin that he stretched and pressed with his hands over a rapidly revolving wheel that resembled an automobile tire until the surface resembled grey velvet.

The glove manufacturer stretched a skin tightly over a board and securely fastened it. Patterns of heavy cardboard were arranged to permit the most economical advantage of every inch of the material. With sharp knives the fronts and backs were cut and with narrow welts included, these were tied into bundles by the dozen. Each shop distributed the bundles to its list of women who expertly sewed the seams with a welt between the two parts by using linen thread and three sided needles that were frequently filed to keep the edges sharp.

After the seams were closely trimmed, round wooden forms were inserted into the fingers and the seams were tapped flat with small wooden mallets. After all of the seams were sewed and treated, the gloves were turned to the right side.

Scores of housewives kept their glove baskets where every spare minute would be snatched to sew a seam. Although the remuneration was almost a pittance, yet these thrifty women found that many dollars accrued from their glove baskets.

After the shops amassed their usual output, dozens of shapes and sizes of gloves and mittens were packed in cases that filled the "democrat" wagons. Within a radius of a hundred miles, the manufacturer marketed his goods to merchants throughout the summer months. Gradually the reputation for quality of the Plymouth Buck Glove filtered into the city stores so widely that salesmen were employed to solicit orders wherever the soft, durable, waterproof gloves and mittens were in demand.

In time the machine age invaded this rural industry until only two of the shops survived the competition. About 1925, only Mr. Gill Fletcher and Mr. Frank C. Calley were supplying customers who were eager to purchase their handmade products. One winter night a fire consumed their equipment and soon the Plymouth Buck Gloves were no more.

Alvah McQuesten was a deacon in the Congregational Church from 1834 to 1857, an honored citizen in the town until his death in 1880 in Roxbury, Massachusetts. The family name should be remembered, because prosperity

was promoted during a half century because of the genius of this patient tanner at the foot of Ward Hill.

## A NEW ACADEMY BUILDING

The dynamic personality of the young minister, Rev. George Punchard, infused new ambition to revive the sessions of The Holmes Plymouth Academy. As authorized agent, Mr. Punchard collected thousands of dollars to remove the old building and erect not only an Academy but two "boarding houses," one for students on the site of the present Rounds Hall, the other for the faculty which is now the home of Mrs. Ernest L. Silver on Summer Street.

Three acres of land were purchased by the trustees and the buildings were ready for the Academy to open in 1836 with an enrollment of 168 students, fifty percent of them from other towns. A theological department was introduced, a custom at that time in other academies, and one diploma was awarded before this experiment was discontinued.

In the fall of 1837, Rev. Samuel Reed Hall was persuaded to accept the position of principal at the salary of $1,650 and a faculty of twelve was hired to assist him. The enrollment increased to 201 students. Mr. Hall introduced a course that was a decided innovation: a class to train teachers for the public schools. Mr. Hall wrote a treatise about his ideas of methods in teacher training and methods of education that reads with the same understanding of mental processes that modern theories advance.

After three years, Rev. Hall was sent to Concord, Vermont as a missionary, a customary title to designate a minister in a rural church. There he opened a school to train teachers that has the credit of being the first Normal School in this country.

The funds that were contributed by citizens to erect the three buildings were given to the Trustees of the Academy who assumed responsibility for the mortgage. The deficits exceeded the income. Soon the enthusiasm waned, the enrollment decreased, and finally in discouragement, the Trustees closed the institution. Several private schools failed to attract students although their curriculum was satisfactory. The buildings were sold to several customers. The last owner was Denison R. Burnham, the landlord of the Pemigewasset Hotel, who sold the property to the State of New Hampshire. (See page 56, Academy, 1835.)

## THE OLD WHITE CHURCH

The above title honors the present Congregational Church building. The meetinghouse on Ward Hill displayed the wear of fifty years. This was the property of the town, yet the voters were unwilling to be taxed for repairs.

*Highland Avenue with the dormitory of 1835 on the site of the present Rounds Hall. This dormitory was moved to become the east wing of the third Pemigewasset Hotel.* *(See page 135.)*

No religious denomination accepted the responsibility. The Methodists had already withdrawn to their new building on Main Street.

While the Congregationalists were debating their problem, suddenly three members—William Wallace Russell and John Rogers, two successful merchants, and Noah Cummings, a prosperous farmer—decided to construct a new church building. William Webster gave the land that adjoined the site of the new courthouse, with a provision in the deed that the "land be forever appropriated to the worship of God."

The logs for the frame were cut in Holderness, then brought to the site and adzed beside the Main Street. With a few alterations, especially for the dome of the belfry, the exterior presents the original design.

The arrangement of the pews and the two aisles was the same as of today with the exception that so called "wing pews" filled the front corners. A box stove stood in the rear on either side with long stove pipes hanging high above the two long aisles to enter the chimneys on the north wall.

The pews were enclosed by doors at the aisles. No cushions, carpet, illumination, or musical instruments were expected to be furnished in 1836. The first service on the Sabbath was on January 1, 1837.

The three men who invested their money in the building offered the pews for sale to heads of families of the congregation. The pews in the center were priced at eighty dollars, with lesser amounts, depending upon the section, either at the sides or the rear of the room. Many pews remained unsold for a number of years. Finally, the Society reimbursed the builders in part in recognition of their willingness to solve the dilemma.

The center of the village, along the west side of Main Street, was transformed in 1837 by the brick store on the corner, horse sheds and the office that William Coombs Thompson built for his lawyer's firm, then the three imposing structures: the White Congregational church, the brick court house, and Holmes Plymouth Academy, a two story brick structure. Three belfries crowned the roofs and white pillars supported the front gables of the courthouse and the Academy. The present Court Street was then a footpath for the use of the faculty and students to approach their dormitories that stood on the hill above these new structures.

## THE ANTI-SLAVERY CONTROVERSY

The Congregational church building was immediately involved in one of the burning questions of that period. The brilliant young lawyer, Nathaniel Peabody Rogers, became an advocate for anti-slavery. He entertained in his home prominent members of the many anti-slavery societies including the poet John Greenleaf Whittier and the most radical William Lloyd Garrison.

*Nathaniel Peabody Rogers, 1794 – 1840*

Mr. Rogers requested the use of the new auditorium for a lecture by Mr. Garrison. Few of the wardens or Rev. George Punchard were then concerned about slavery. Mr. Webster once owned two slaves. However, the newspaper that Mr. Garrison published, "The Liberator," was printing dangerous ideas, even proposing that the North secede from the Union unless slavery should be abolished in the United States.

The wardens concluded to refuse permission to allow Mr. Garrison to lecture in the new church building. With a determination not to be thwarted, a grove was rented in Holderness beside the Dartmouth College Road, south of the property of Mr. Harrison Sargent, Jr., and seats were provided under the pines. There Mr. Garrison delivered his lecture, speaking from 3 to 7 P.M. before an audience of approximately three hundred people.

Mr. Rogers resented the refusal bitterly. He soon removed to Concord to assume the position of editor of the anti-slavery newspaper, "The Herald of Freedom." For Mr. Rogers, anti-slavery became an obsession. He abandoned the successful practice of his profession, lost his health and almost his

reason. He sold his beautiful home to Mr. James McQuesten, then a lawyer in Plymouth.

Finally, broken in mind and body, Mr. Rogers purchased a farm on the Fairground Road, near the ledges that the Poet Whittier named "Under Cliff," where rest might be found. Suddenly death claimed his life at the age of fifty-two years.

The memory of this brilliant native son of Plymouth has been inscribed in articles by several contemporary magazines, with appreciation for a man whose compassion, generosity and devotion to the freedom of the slaves should never be forgotten.

## SUMMARY

The Pottery Business, Plymouth Buck Gloves, New Plymouth Holmes Academy building, 1835, The Congregational Church Building, 1836, The Anti-Slavery Controversy, certainly this was a busy decade.

Horse and Buggy Period

*The horse-trough at the north of the Village Green and hitching posts along the sidewalks are conspicuous.*

*The First Pemigewasset House, opened in 1843. Notice the gambrel roof at the north end. This was the second Webster Tavern that was enlarged repeatedly in later years, and destroyed by fire in 1862.* *(See the picture on page 38.)*

# 1843 - 1853

## THE PEMIGEWASSET HOUSE

This ninth decade was an exciting period for Plymouth.

Mr. William Webster was over seventy years of age when Mr. Denison Rogers Burnham offered a considerable price for the Webster Tavern. The temptation was not too difficult to accept, although the Webster name was closely associated with the town. The Webster family moved into the Stephen Webster residence on Main Street and opened a few rooms to transient guests, thus continuing the Webster Tavern name on the street.

Mr. Burnham purchased the property in 1841. In 1843 he had renovated and enlarged the house and named it The Pemigewasset House. This man possessed ideal characteristics for a successful landlord. Although born in Rumney, he became a merchant in Groton, Vermont for a time, certainly excellent training for good public relations. He was generous, friendly and executive.

His principles were to do it yourself, not relinquish responsibilities to others. He welcomed his guests at the door when the stages from all points swept up to his house. He conducted each person to his room. He personally supervised his cuisine. Soon the reputation of his hotel ranked with the best in New Hampshire. Mr. Burnham ran a strictly temperance house.

When travelers arrived in their own conveyances, his stables were equipped to house any number of horses. If guests desired to drive through the mountains, comfortable transportation was at hand. Soon the house proved too crowded and was enlarged to accommodate scores of patrons.

The reader should realize that central heating and modern lighting were not known in 1843. Mr. Burnham advertised in the newspaper for fifty cords of rock-maple wood. Many maids must have warmed the beds with long handled pans filled with coals from the fireplaces and carried gallons of hot water to each room. Mid-winter cold and snow did not encourage travelers to seek recreation as far north as Plymouth. Winter conditions a century ago are almost impossible to picture in this twentieth century.

## TAVERNS IN PLYMOUTH

The Webster Tavern, mentioned above, was attractive to judges and legal counsel when the County Court was in session. On the hill above the

Academy, Mr. John T. Cutter purchased the students' boarding house and opened it to summer guests. Later he ran a tavern on Main Street about on the site of the Newberry Store.

A large two story house had been erected on the site of the present Fox Block that was the tavern of Mr. Ephraim Green and Son. The father had a reputation of questionable customs that bestowed the title of "Slicky Green" on him in the vicinity. He was a blacksmith by trade. Frequently the horses that were stabled for the night in his barn required new shoes before departing. He was said to have bored small holes in the bottoms of the mangers so that grain sifted into the boxes below as the horses nosed about for food.

This house burned in a fire that swept that corner some years later.

The toll house at the Pont Fayette Bridge was purchased by Alvin Thompson Burleigh for a tavern. He promoted a stage line through the mountains and his stables were patronized by travelers.

There were taverns in the village, as well as along the Mayhew Turnpike and at Lower Intervale, because the tap rooms were the gathering places where politics and town topics were discussed over the mugs of cider or the more potent New England Rum.

Many temperance societies were actively opposing the licenses for the sale of intoxicating beverages. The effects of the brand of liquor were devastating to health and to mental reactions. Wife beating was not forbidden by

*Pont Fayette, 1844–1934, over the Pemigewasset River between Plymouth and Holderness.*

law. Both women and children suffered when an intoxicated man returned to his home in an uninhibited temper.

## THE BRIDGE OF 1844

At the town meeting in the meetinghouse on Ward Hill in March of 1842 the men voted "That the Town of Plymouth build and repair the Pont Fayette Bridge in connection with the Town of Holderness."

The following year the two towns purchased the bridge from Mr. William C. Thompson for $350.00. While this may seem to be a small price, the structure was so out of repair that safety demanded action. Probably the toll charges had recompensed Lawyer Thompson for his investment since he became the owner in 1830.

At the town meeting in March of 1844, again the vote was to either repair or rebuild the bridge. Mr. Noah Cummings was appointed chairman of the project. Mr. Cummings was considered a substantial citizen. He was then the owner of the Glover Farm on Cummings Hill, the Pem Farm in West Plymouth and the house on Highland Street west of the Pemigewasset Hotel lot. Mr. Russell Cox was responsible for the Town of Holderness, on the building committee.

The first Pont Fayette Bridge was taken down. Then the bridge that stood during the following ninety years was constructed at an expense of $3,180.82. Iron bolts were used with the exception of a few wooden pins in the roof. In contrast the steel bridge of 1934 cost $48,943.00. Engineers finally discovered the art of truss design that withstood the stress of wind and traffic, ice pressures and flood waters, and the force of gravity.

Here was a famous covered bridge, 262 feet, 2½ inches long and 18 feet, 6½ inches wide on the inside. The design of the trusses is the same that is still found in the Blair Bridge in Campton and the Smith Bridge in Plymouth. The Blair Bridge is said to be dated in 1828, the Smith about the same year. At Rumney and over the Baker River the same truss design was used. One author states that Captain Richardson was the engineer for the Smith Bridge. Both the Blair and Smith have laminated arches for reinforcements that were additions since the bridges were first erected. No other bridges in this vicinity have the design of these trussses. They now are tourist attractions.

It may be well to mention here that in Campton the Turkey Jim Bridge is also now famous because of its construction with the early Queen Post truss, one of the few remaining in use with this ancient plan in a covered bridge. Turkey Jim was a veteran of World War I who raised thousands of turkeys on the island that this bridge connects to the main land.

*William A. Dodge, 1818 – 1883*

## BOSTON, CONCORD & MONTREAL R.R.

January 15, 1850 was an eventful date in Plymouth. On that day a train of freight cars rolled into the town, drawn by two engines: "Josiah Quincy," named in honor of the first President of this railroad corporation, and "John McDuffee," in honor of the surveyor who blazed the trails through the wilderness for the northern townships.

The citizens of the town welcomed this arrival with cheers and the roar of a cannon. The cars were filled with merchandise for William W. Russell & Company.

On the 18th of January, 1850, a special train of passenger cars brought officials of the corporation who were entertained by Landlord Denison R. Burnham at his own expense in his Pemigewasset Hotel. Even in the January cold, a program of speeches, stories and toasts was enjoyed by the inhabitants of Plymouth and the surrounding towns.

*Josiah Quincy's railroad station in Rumney. Notice the wood in the tender of the engine.*

Within the following summer, the railroad was extended to Woodsville, the cut through the ledges at the Summit being considered a remarkable engineering feat. Already the railroad was running up the Connecticut Valley and on to Littleton. Rapidly the "summer boarder" influx brought prosperity for the farmers' wives, who opened their homes to guests, and to hotels in the mountains.

## OFFICIALS OF THE RAILROAD

To Lawyer Josiah Quincy credit should be appraised for his influence that induced the financial backing to build the railroad from Concord to Plymouth. He was born in Lenox, Massachusetts, in 1793. He came to Plymouth at the age of twenty-five years and in 1819 he married the daughter of Mr. Jabes Hatch Weld. The beautiful colonial residence that he erected stands near the line of the railroad in Rumney. For his accommodation a flag station named Quincy was maintained until the tracks were removed.

He was a valued citizen. He filled positions in the legislature and was a trustee of Holmes Plymouth Academy and in the Pemigewasset Bank of 1825.

Joseph Allen Dodge was the first station agent in 1850. After two years

*The Starr King Elm in 1850 and the office for the railroad. The trees grew to shade Railroad Square.*

he became general freight agent and finally general manager of the system. He erected a brick house on South Main Street where he brought his bride from New Boston, where both were born. (See picture on page 20.)

Mr. Dodge was a director in the corporation and constantly promoted its development. He was a Democrat in politics and because of his efforts, combined with Mr. James Fogg Langdon and Lawyer Joseph Burrows, the cannon that stands on the Courthouse Green was brought to Plymouth. This gun was presented to the Democratic Party in Plymouth. It was fired to celebrate the election of candidates in the party until there was fear that it might be destroyed from abuse.

The Republicans would steal the gun, toss it into the river or hide it for months. They filled the barrel with sods to prevent its use. The Democrats stored it in hiding for several years. Finally the historical value became known. That ended the danger of its destruction from wanton abuse.

Without doubt, as Mr. Harold C. Freeman ascertained as a member of the American Legion, the barrel of this cannon was brought to New Hampshire by General John Stark, being one of the four that he captured at the Battle of Bennington in 1777. The Legion now is responsible for its preser-

*Benjamin B. Dearborn's Store and Green's Tavern, at the corner of Highland and Main Streets, burned in 1869. Rebuilt and burned in 1905. Tufts Block, burned in 1930. Site of two banks in 1963.*

vation. New carriage and wheels have been provided and paint to protect it from the weather is frequently applied to its surface.

Unfortunately, the details about the possession of this old gun are forgotten. However, recently another of the four cannon has been located in New Boston, the native town of Mr. Dodge. This may be a clue to the story of this cannon in Plymouth.

Mr. Dodge represented Plymouth in the legislature for three terms and was a member on Governor Weston's staff in 1881. He was an active member of the Society of the Congregational Church. He died in 1883. Mrs. Dodge remained in Plymouth until her death in 1900, a woman of superior ability and kindness to those in need.

## RAILROAD SQUARE

With "Squire" Quincy and the offices of this Division of the railroad at Plymouth, a two story office building was erected at the level of the tracks, beside the drive from Main Street.

The design was impressive, with a hip roof, dentile pattern around the eaves, block corners and Roman window frames in the first story. Tall trees and wide lawns appropriately designated the area The Railroad Square. This fine specimen of Victorian architecture was demolished in 1929 after the offices were removed to Concord.

## THE DEARBORN STORE

Benjamin Baker Dearborn removed from Campton to Plymouth in 1849

and opened a general store in a new building on the site of the Pemigewasset Bank of today. Until his death in 1861, Mr. Dearborn was a prosperous merchant and a valued citizen both in the religious and the public life of the town.

The high building, painted white, dominated the south side of Highland Street until a fire consumed it in 1862.

## THE WHITE MOUNTAIN BUGLE

Among the papers that Mr. Hendrick Gordon Webster, born in 1847, collected is a copy of The White Mountain Bugle, dated January 15, 1848. The heading stated "Vol. 1, No. 3. Published by R. C. Stevens at the north room of the range of Chambers connected with Russell & Webster's Store." The terms were 25 cts. for the Campaign.

This four page issue was opposing the administration of James K. Polk, the President and Franklin Pierce for Vice President. The Mexican War was "prodigal of the lives and fortunes of the people, yet there is no promise of its success."

A Convention was called at Plymouth. "Come brethren, in strong numbers, and let us do a good Day's work for our country and her true interests. Get out the double sleighs, and bring a large delegation from Rumney, Campton, Holderness and Bridgewater."

The Russell & Webster advertisements at the Old Brick Store read:

"FALL AND WINTER WOOLLENS

Have just received, and offer for sale, at low prices, and on liberal terms, a desirable Fall and Winter assortment of

Fashionable Woollens

and goods connected with that department of Trade. German and English and American Broadcloths, Plain and Fancy Doeskins and Cassimeres, Heavy Beaver and Pilot Cloths for Over-Coats, Fancy Coatings, Silk and Wool Codington, and Heavy and Thin Tweeds, Silk Velvets & Serges of good make, in black and fancy colors, Rich Dark Vestings—Valencias, Cashmeres, Figured Velvets & boiled Silk and Satins. Also, medium and low Vestings, extensive variety. Tailor's Trimmings Of all kinds and varieties in use—at very low prices. CLOAKINGS, Twilled Flannels, and Satinets &c., &c., at low prices."

Crockery and Hard Ware, Nails, Iron, Sheet Zink, Window Glass, Paints and Oils. Drugs, Medicines, and Dye Stuffs.

Flour, Salt, Lime, Lump and Ground Plaster, Pork, Beef, Grain, Leather, Cooking, Box and Air Tight Stoves, Hollow Ware, Stove Pipe, &c., &c., &c. Also—Agents for most of the Popular Patent Medicines of the present day."

Certainly customers were enticed to purchase, at the Old Brick Store, a surprising list of commodities at the middle of the nineteenth century in this rural community of about 2,000 inhabitants.

H. W. Merrill advertised: "Having fitted up rooms over Russell's & Webster's Store, he is prepared to take Miniatures of all sizes, Daguerreotypes, particular attention paid to small children."

F. W. A. Robie, Tailor, advertised: "Ready-Made Clothing and Tailor's Trimmings, for sale Cheap." His shop was south of the Pemigewasset Hotel.

Gilmore Houston: "At the Old Stand, two doors south of the Pemigewasset House" was making "Saddle, Harness and Trunks."

Apparently this newspaper failed to attract subscribers. Like its predecessor of the same name, its existence was brief.

## SUMMARY

The Pemigewasset House, Taverns in Plymouth, The Bridge of 1844 replacing Pont Fayette, Arrival of the Boston, Concord & Montreal Railroad, Welcome to the Officials of the Railroad, Railroad Square, The Dearborn Store, and The White Mountain Bugle Newspaper, were events of importance for the town.

*William Wallace Russell, who erected the Congregational Church.*

# 1853 - 1863

This decade began with a prosperous business outlook. Russell's and Webster's Store evidently increased its stock that required an addition to the building in 1854. The name, Webster, was associated with William Wallace Russell and his sons about 1830 when Samuel Cummings Webster became a clerk at the age of nineteen. Within the following eleven years, he advanced to become a member of the firm and remained there over a period of forty-one years.

*Samuel Cummings Webster, Jr., 1817 – 1887*

No citizen of Plymouth was more highly regarded for his sagacity, coupled with a quaint sense of humor that imprinted the name of Sam Webster to this day upon the memories of his customers. His original maxims should have been written before they were forgotten. One of his young clerks recalled his advice when certain customers were wandering about the store. Mr. Webster would remark quietly, "Two, ten, boys." Two meant use your two eyes while ten fingers may shop-lift goods.

When a young salesman was told that every article that he might demand would be found in the stock, he declared that he would test that statement. Accordingly, he faced Mr. Webster with a request for a church pulpit. With his most courteous manner Mr. Webster requested his customer to follow him. Into a store room they walked and there Mr. Webster displayed a pulpit to the chagrin of the salesman who realized that he must pay his wager.

The pulpit was the base of the Ward Hill sacred desk, now the lectern in the Congregational Church chancel. When the old meetinghouse was demolished, a neighbor saved the pulpit in her wood shed. Unfortunately, her husband was addicted to New England rum and became angry when under the influence. In this condition he returned to his home one day and vented his anger by using his ax to cut up the old pulpit.

The late Moody Gore hurried up the hill, when he was informed about this destruction, just in time to rescue the carved base of the sacred desk. This he added to the goods in Russell's & Webster's back-room and saved the reputation of the business—although in this case, without the intention.

## GLOVE HOLLOW

The Lower Intervale was a rival of West Plymouth in its industries, because a brook flowed swiftly from Cummings Hill to the Pemigewasset River. Capt. James Hobart built a grist mill by a waterfall and also a saw mill under one roof. A brick yard was not far away and a tan yard was there in 1811. After passing through the hands of several other owners, this water power was purchased in 1856 by Thomas Glynn who introduced a circular saw there, an invention that revolutionized the lumber business.

This brook was named by its owners several times, but finally Currier Brook became the fixed title after Aaron Currier settled under the hill below the Cummings Hill Road. His grandsons, Daniel and Henry, became leather dressers and manufactured gloves in the small building, now falling into decay in the hollow near the brook.

About as early as Alvah McQuesten developed his buckskins, Jason C. Draper began to manufacture gloves, tanning his leather near the brook. In

*The lectern in the chancel of the Congregational Church that Moody Gore rescued on Ward Hill.*

1857, Nathaniel F. Draper opened a glove shop at the top of the hill, looking south into Glove Hollow. Later, Thomas and David Glynn tanned and dressed glove stock and made gloves also. Across the highway from the Draper home lived Perley Currier who sent his gloves to be sewed as far away as Center Harbor. Thus the name, Glove Hollow, originated around these tanneries and glove shops of a century ago.

## AGRICULTURAL FAIRS

An article that was published in the "Boston Globe" stated that the first County Fair in America was at Pittsfield, Massachusetts in 1810. This custom spread rapidly into New Hampshire. The New Hampshire Agricultural Society began in 1812 and was reorganized in 1850. The Grafton Agricultural Society was incorporated in 1818 and a cattle show was held in Plymouth about 1820.

In 1858, the Eleventh Annual Fair of the Grafton County Agricultural

Society spread its tents and pens on both sides of the Pemigewasset River on the meadows near the Pemigewasset House. Here Landlord Burnham provided a foot bridge across the stream to an island with a park and gardens.

The race track extended in a straight course and the horses raced up and down the field. A newspaper report of this fair may be read in Stearns' History of Plymouth.

One statement is of special interest, "Excellent music was furnished by the Holderness and the Plymouth bands. Although the last named was organized only six months ago, its performance was highly creditable." The leader of this early band was known by the title, "Cappy Little."

The fairs did not become annual gatherings until the present grounds were leased from Mr. Alfred Cook in 1871. This author remembers attending the fair in 1883. Transportation was by the railroad, the trains both north and south arriving in the morning and leaving about four o'clock in the afternoon.

Everybody brought his lunch. The noon hour was a picnic with exchanges of samples of pie and cake by the homemakers. Gypsies were offering to tell fortunes and a Merry-Go-Round was crowded. The final memory is of a very tired little girl, a train crowded with not even standing room, and how grateful she was when the deacon's wife offered a seat on her lap.

## ROSE LAWN

Col. David Webster's acres were unoccupied on the hill above Main street until 1854 when a grandson, David Clough Webster, erected the large house with the pillard portico known as Rose Lawn. The name was attached because a rose garden was cultivated about the lawn that attracted visitors who frequented the Pemigewasset Hotel on the opposite side of the street. This house was opened to guests in later years. Now it is the one landmark remaining from a generation of a century gone by.

## THE WOMEN'S SOCIAL CIRCLE

The year 1858 marks the beginning of organizations by women of the churches. At the home of Mrs. John Keniston on Main Street, that stood about on the site of the present Gulf Station, about sixty women assembled to organize The Women's Social Circle of the Congregational Church. Their annual dues were twenty-five cents. However, very soon they began to earn funds by the same methods that are perpetuated today. The annual church fairs were instituted shortly and suppers that specialized in baked beans, oysters and harvest menus supplemented their meager dues. By contrast, the usual price, except for oysters, was ten cents per person.

*Henry William Blair in his Civil War uniform, 1862.*

## THE CIVIL WAR

The attack upon Fort Sumter on April 15, 1861 astonished the quiet village of Plymouth. Yet attention should have been called to a native son who was becoming closely associated with Abraham Lincoln. The suggestion may not be amiss that pages 435-442 in Stearns' History of Plymouth are filled with personal reminiscence by Hon. Alfred Russell of his associations with President Abraham Lincoln that should be widely read.

Alfred Russell was born in the brick home on Highland Street, the son of William Wallace Russell, on March 18, 1830. He was educated in Holmes Plymouth Academy, and Dartmouth College where he was graduated with Phi Beta Kappa honors. In 1852 he received the degree of LL.B. at Harvard Law School.

He was admitted to the Bar in New Hampshire in October and immediately removed to Detroit, Michigan. Within the succeeding six years he was presenting cases before the Supreme Court of the United States.

He attended the convention in 1854 at Jackson, Michigan, that founded the Republican Party. Two years after, he became acquainted with Mr. Lincoln, forming a close, personal friendship that continued until President Lincoln was assassinated. His tribute to President Lincoln is an honor to the town of Plymouth.

President Lincoln called for 75,000 troops. Eight men in Plymouth immediately volunteered for the First New Hampshire Regiment, enlisting for three months, then for three years in later regiments. Eleven men, either natives or residents of the town, enlisted in the gallant Fifth Regiment, and thirty-eight in the famous Sixth.

Before the close of the war, over 250 men of Plymouth served in the army. One should recall that a soldier in the Civil War fought face to face with his foes; he witnessed the horror of battle.

After a century, the words of President Lincoln should be pondered: "We must never forget" what the volunteers in Plymouth did in the Civil War. The North was without preparation for the conflict. Especially wanting were facilities to relieve the wounded. Only two hospitals existed in 1861: one in New York, the other in Boston. Nurses were men; a trained woman nurse was unheard of. Anesthesia was in the experimental field. Antiseptics were undiscovered.

Without sanitary equipment, wounded men died by thousands. Women became aroused which resulted in the formation of the Sanitary and Christian Commission. The women of Plymouth responded generously with bandages, lint made of linen scraped to a downy substance for dressing wounds, foods for invalids, and sums of money. The women of the Methodist Church were commended in the newspaper, "The New Hampshire Statesman," for their gift of money. The signature of a woman on a check would not have been honored a century ago.

The railroads and telegraph were in operation. Mail service was absent or delayed. The Civil War Commission, now sanctioned with thousands of dollars by the United States Government, is searching for letters and diaries throughout the country that have been hidden in attics and almost forgotten. Families in this town will fulfill a service to posterity by offering to submit to the American Legion any historical facts that may be recorded in correspondence from their sons who fought in the Civil War.

## HENRY WILLIAM BLAIR

One volunteer in the Civil War was distinguished in the Fifteenth Regiment. Henry William Blair resigned his position of County Solicitor to enlist in 1862. He attempted to enlist in 1861 but was rejected by the surgeons. Immediately after his acceptance in the Fifteenth Regiment, he was appointed captain of Company B, then commissioned major of the regiment and in 1863 became lieutenant-colonel. He was severely wounded twice but continued in the service until the regiment was mustered out in August of 1863.

Henry W. Blair was born on a hill-top farm in Campton. He attended schools in Plymouth and the academies at Plymouth and New Hampton. As was the custom of many students, he taught school in the winter terms. The older pupils who studied in these winter schools were frequently problems in discipline. They expected to try out the teachers. In consequence, vigorous young men were usually employed with no restrictions about corporal punishment.

Mr. Blair prepared for his profession by reading law in the office of William Leverett with such success that he was admitted to the Bar in 1859. Mr. Leverett formed a partnership with his pupil under the firm name of Leverett and Blair, in the office beside the Congregational Church.

Legislative affairs began to fill his time in 1866. He progressed from representative for Plymouth to the State Senate, then to representative in Congress for two terms, and in 1879 he became United States Senator.

His reputation as a statesman was of the highest integrity.

## WILLIAM JEWETT TUCKER

Another young lad was growing to manhood in Plymouth, William Jewett Tucker, who was destined for a distinguished career in the theological and education fields. He was the nephew of Mrs. Tucker, the wife of the clergyman at the Congregational church, Rev. William Reed Jewett.

Mr. Jewett was the pastor from 1845 to 1862. The family resided in a rambling house on the site of Hall Dormitory. William was born in Griswold, Connecticut in 1839. His early schooling was in Plymouth. He was a brilliant student with characteristics that stamped his boyhood in the memory of those with whom he was associated.

After graduation at Dartmouth in 1861, he finished his course at Andover Theological Seminary in 1866. His first pastorate was at Manchester, New Hampshire. Until 1893, he filled positions in theological institutions, then became President of Dartmouth College. His influence as counselor and guide to his students cannot be measured. He retired in 1909 and died in Hanover in 1926.

## REV. THOMAS STARR KING

A summer guest at the Pemigewasset House was Rev. Thomas Starr King, one of the foremost preachers in the Unitarian denomination in his time.

He was born in New York in 1824, and lived in Charlestown, Massachusetts where he was employed as a clerk in a store at twelve years of age. He was teaching school at sixteen and became a minister at twenty-two.

He began to write about the White Mountain region from his personal walking trips around Plymouth and Jefferson. His favorite spot was in Campton, now named the Starr King View, where he was wont to spend hours sitting on the bank above the Pemigewasset River about in the location of the former West Campton Schoolhouse.

He published his "Tales of the White Hills" in 1859 that was so popular that several editions were printed and sold which aided in attracting tourists to visit his special beauty spots. In Plymouth, he is said to have sat beneath a spreading elm on the grounds of the hotel, now called "The Starr King Elm." (See Elm on page 81.)

Mr. King was an enthusiastic advocate of anti-slavery. His health failed in 1860 and he went to California for rest. There he lectured with such eloquent persuasion that much credit is his that California remained among the free states at the beginning of the Civil War.

He died in California in 1864 at the age of forty years. When the state unveiled two statues in the National Statuary hall in Washington, the celebrated Unitarian minister was one; the other was a founder of one of the early missions in California.

## PEMIGEWASSET HOTEL FIRE

At the close of this decade, in 1862, a fire of disastrous proportions destroyed the Pemigewasset Hotel. Since no newspaper was then published in the town, no details are remembered. Russell's & Webster's store owned a so-called "Depot Store" that was also consumed with the contents.

A picture taken in 1860 shows the gambrel roof of the Webster Tavern and the gabled roofs above the second story. Wide verandas on two sides and six chimneys indicate that the comfort and pleasure of his guests were uppermost in the intentions of Landlord Burnham. The building was set far off Main Street to the east, surrounded by wide lawns enclosed by fences.

At the time of this fire, kerosene lamps were considered safe for household use. In 1849, brackets that held kerosene lamps were hung on the walls of the Congregational church. However, not until several years later did Mr. John D. Rockefeller refine the oil to produce a non-explosive kerosene.

Candles were discarded in many homes and street lights were designed that were elevated upon poles, their four-sided glass panels shedding a dim glow from the kerosene light within. The exact year when this innovation appeared along the streets is not certain. Mrs. Elwin Smith possesses several of these relics that changed the darkness of centuries to a glimmer of light along the village streets.

## FUNERAL CUSTOMS

The first reference to burial of the dead in the history of Plymouth states that two brothers, Freeman and Ephraim Cook, owned a saw mill on Hazeltine Brook in 1860. They offered coffins for sale.

In early times, a family stored a few boards ready to build a coffin if death occurred in its own or a neighbor's family. Embalming was impossible, only the sympathetic ministrations of an experienced person prepared the body for burial. Sanitation was practiced by bathing with lye soap and saltpeter.

Before the roads were more than bridle paths, the casket was carried by "bearers." A bier was fashioned with two saplings, each about ten feet long, separated near the center by crosspieces to form a platform upon which the casket was placed. On the shoulders of four men, this bier and coffin was carried to the cemetery. Usually short pieces were inserted into the saplings for legs to permit the bearers to set the bier on the ground for rest or to change sides to relieve aching shoulders.

To cover the coffin a pall or cloth was spread and four men, called pall bearers, held its corners to prevent its slipping. After roads became passable, usually a town purchased a hearse for common use.

After the Dartmouth Medical School graduated students in 1789, "grave-snatching" for bodies to use in experimental study was not uncommon. In fear of such disturbances, families located cemeteries in proximity to their homes.

Above South Main Street is such a tomb on the lot formerly owned by Mr. Jabez Hatch Wells. Mr. Obadiah G. Smith, a contractor, came to Plymouth in 1865. While he was excavating for a cellar for the house now owned by Mr. John Johnson on Crawford Street, a passageway underground was discovered that led to a bricked-up doorway. When this was opened, a tomb was found with large stone walls, ten by twelve feet square, covered by three long, flat stones, that were supported in the center by two stone pillars, containing seven coffins.

After a relative of the Wells Family was discovered and permission obtained, these caskets were interred in a lot at Riverside Cemetery, with proper

inscriptions. One folktale exists that a ghost was known to wander about this spot that frightened the superstitious from renting a house on Crawford Street.

## CEMETERIES

In sight of the highways are Pleasant Valley near the Smith Bridge; Currier on Lower Intervale; Turnpike on Route 3A; at the Spencer Farm on Route 25; and Riverside on the Fairground Road.

Scattered over the hills are twelve burial grounds. Along the Reservoir Road at Huckins Hill is the grave of a Civil War soldier named Howard surrounded by an iron rail; beyond is the Ellis Ground containing many graves; and the Glover Farm; Pike Hill; Bayley or Bartlett; Stearns on the Texas Road; on the hill near Glove Hollow; and the Union with Bridgewater.

On the Fairground Road, about opposite the gate to the Grange Fair grounds, is an early burial ground surrounded by an iron railing; on Beech Hill is the private Merrill Family ground, and at the Cook Neighborhood. The graves of the Webster Family are near the Trinity Chapel in Holderness.

## SUMMARY

The addition to the Russell & Webster Store, Business in Glove Hollow, Story of Early Agricultural Fairs, A Landmark—Rose Lawn, Women's Social Circle—beginning of Women's Organizations, The Civil War, Thomas Starr King, William Jewett Tucker and Henry W. Blair—three important Citizens, Pemigewasset Hotel Fire, Funeral Customs indicate many changes.

*Sheep on the hill above Loon Pond. The low hill at the left is "The Knowl." In the dim distance, "Old Chimney" rises, named for a fireplace believed to have been used by Indians for their beacon fires.*

*Second Pemigewasset Hotel—1863 – 1909*

# 1863-1873

## THE SECOND PEMIGEWASSET HOTEL

The Pemigewasset hotel was in ruins and Mr. Burnham retired from the hotel business. The management of the railroad realized that their summer traffic and the restaurant demanded a hotel. Accordingly, Mr. John E. Lyons, the manager, decided that The Concord and Montreal Railroad would finance construction of a three story, T-shaped building with a gable roof and dormer windows in the attic.

On the level of the tracks a one story extension served for the station and the restaurant. A wide staircase ascended to the first floor of the hotel and the spacious diningroom.

At the noon hour, trains from the north and the south met at Plymouth. Passengers crowded the restaurant and the diningroom.

Meanwhile the engine was fired with hard wood that sent a cloud of black smoke from its stack while the tender was refilled. Mushroom shaped smoke stacks covered with fine meshed screening prevented sparks from starting fires along the line of tracks. Then quiet reigned until the same rush hour was repeated at 5 P.M.

One of the recreations in the summertime for the villagers was to crowd the station platform to watch the trains arrive. The contrast of the costumes of the city boarders with the styles of the rural women was carefully studied, since few subscribed to Godey's Magazine of fashions that Mrs. Josepha Hale was then publishing.

About a year after, on May 19, 1864, a sad event occurred when the novelist, Nathaniel Hawthorne, suddenly died in a room directly above the front entrance. Hawthorne was in failing health and his friend, the recent President of the United States, Franklin Pierce, accompanied him with the hope that the mountain air would restore his strength. The students of Plymouth High School have placed a bronze tablet in honor of Hawthorne on the Village Common.

## THE VILLAGE IMPROVEMENT SOCIETY

The slope from the post office to the sidewalk on the east side of Main Street falls about twelve feet. In 1863 this was a rough, gravel bank. The

citizens decided to landscape this plot that was surrounded by dusty streets in the summer and snow banks in the winter.

A village improvement society graded the bank and surrounded it with the fence of colonial pattern, also seen in several towns in New Hampshire. The granite posts were drilled to receive the irons that firmly connect the square, wooden rails. Trees were planted within this enclosure a century ago.

Mr. Moses Batchelder, who was born in 1866, related that he followed his grandfather around the streets while he set the elms that are fast disappearing because of age or disease. Thus, the Common became the Village Center.

## NEW STORES ALONG THE SQUARE

Three young men began their careers in business at this decade. First to arrive was Plummer Fox from Campton, second was John Mason of Bristol, and third, John Tufts from Gilmanton. Young Fox and Mason were clerks in the Webster, Russell & Co. store for three years. Then they formed a partnership in the Dearborn Store that Mrs. Dearborn had rebuilt since the fire. During the following seventeen years they carried on together. Meanwhile, Mr. Tufts sold dry goods, then drugs around the corner.

Mr. Fox remained alone on Highland Street. Mr. Mason built the block on the corner of Main and Bridge Street, called in later years the Sargent block, and continued in business until his death in 1898. Meanwhile several fires occurred and in 1895 again the entire Fox corner was destroyed. Then Mr. Fox erected on Main Street the large, three story Fox block.

## RUSSELL STREET IN 1869

One day in the summer of 1868, Mr. and Mrs. John Mudgett of Holderness decided to remove to Plymouth. After exploring the vacant east end of Summer street, they turned south across Highland street to look over a gate below Russell House into the cow pasture of William W. Russell's property.

They saw the house above Main street that Mr. W. Z. Ripley had built, now the home of Mr. and Mrs. Harl Pease. Beyond was the home of Mr. David Clough Webster, the grandson of Col. David Webster, later called "Rose Lawn." Then these homes had an unobstructed view of Mount Prospect with the lawns of the Pemigewasset hotel in the foreground.

The pasture seemed inviting for a houselot. Mr. Mudgett purchased the land, now at the corner of Russell and Pleasant streets, and immediately erected the present house for himself, wife and three year old daughter, Caroline. At thirty-nine years of age, Mr. Mudgett was a skilled carpenter, and growing Plymouth offered future homes to construct along the new streets.

Russell street was opened from Highland. Soon Mr. James Langdon

built the house at Number 2, a spacious residence at that period. This Langdon family came from Portsmouth.

Along Russell street at the corner of Webster a large residence was soon built and another at number 25, the home of Mrs. Edward A. Chase. Several years passed before Russell street joined Warren street.

Following west along Warren street a brook flows down through the trees, where Winter street meets Warren, that gained the name of Shamrock Valley. Among Miss Caroline Mudgett's papers, she tells how this spot acquired its name.

## SHAMROCK VALLEY

A few years before 1869, the immigration of many families arrived from Ireland, attracted by employment in the cotton mills. Gradually a few Sons of Erin settled in Plymouth, three families in the beginning. One by the name of Murphy lived by the brook and the others nearby. Mr. Murphy was employed by Mr. Dodge of the railroad. Mrs. Murphy was a neighborly person and one morning while in the Mudgett kitchen she remarked, "Ye might think it a terrible thing to get married, but ye get used to it, ye get used to it!" spoken in her broad Irish brogue. Shamrock Valley and Fox Pond closeby should not be forgotten names of a century ago.

## THE TOWN HALL

The history of this building dates back to 1798-1802 and the reason that it came to Plymouth relates to the second meetinghouse on Ward Hill. Without repairs the meetinghouse became unfit for public use. In 1865 it was sold and became a storage place. Twelve years later the building was taken apart and the frame went to Campton Hollow, beside the Beebe River near the beautiful waterfall, for a sawmill which was consumed by fire on February 19, 1884.

In these years Plymouth did not possess a hall for the town meetings or a voting place.

At Wishman's Corner in Campton, a Congregational church was erected in 1798 at an expense of $2,000. Public worship of God was held there during the following fifty-six years until October 10, 1858.

Then the building became Cook's Hall in Plymouth with an arrangement with the town for an annual rental of fifty-five dollars, to be used for town meetings, records and voting.

Mr. Ephraim Cook was a carpenter and mill owner. He demolished the church piece by piece, moved it to Main street on a lot almost opposite Bridge street, built stores for the first floor and erected the old timbers for a second floor and a wide attic on the third floor.

THE TOWN HALL, 1858 – 1938

The Masons, G.A.R., American Legion and related organizations rented the upper floors until 1938. Mr. Fred W. Brown purchased the building and razed it when the town decided to widen High street.

## PLYMOUTH NORMAL SCHOOL

Improvement for education in the public schools was a problem that within the past ten years had been discussed by prominent men, especially Mr. Hiram Orcutt of Lebanon, New Hampshire. He introduced a bill in 1870 at the legislature to establish a Normal School for the professional training of teachers. Fortunately, this bill became law.

Plymouth was then divided into a dozen districts, each collecting its own taxes, employing teachers without standards of any certificate concerning their scholarship, often a relative of a member of the district committee. The law instructed a board of seven trustees to advertise for proposals from towns, corporations or individuals to furnish school property or funds on condition of securing the location for the School.

Plymouth possessed the vacant Holmes Plymouth Academy. Lawyer Joseph Burrows and State Senator Henry W. Blair were active in placing the School in Plymouth. The town purchased the Academy from Mr. Denison Burnham and the dormitory from Mr. John T. Cutter and presented them to the State. The railroad donated $4,000 and citizens $1,100. Also, District No. 2 agreed to pay the State the amount that was raised for the public school in return for instruction of these pupils in a model school for practice teaching by students. In real estate and cash, $42,000 was paid to the State to establish the School in Plymouth.

In 1871 a spring term of eight weeks began at the institution. The State contributed $5,000 annually for the salary of the faculty and $8,000 for repairs and enlargement of the building with a new mansard roof and tower. There were people throughout the state who opposed the Normal School, claiming that only a few students profited at the expense of the taxpayers.

The course of study covered but one year; the requirements for admission did not demand a high school course of study or graduation from one of the academies in the state. Throughout New Hampshire hundreds of small rural one-room schools existed, many of them closed during the three winter months. Often girls from these schools became students at Plymouth.

The students paid their board and room, while the state furnished the salaries for the faculty and the books. The students compensated for their tuition and books by teaching in New Hampshire for the time that they attended the Normal School.

The fourth principal was Mr. Henry P. Warren, a man of high scholar-

*Plymouth Normal School—1871*

ship and experience. After four years of faithful work at the school, he received a position that meant too great an advancement to be refused.

The position was filled by Mr. Charles C. Rounds, an educator with the ability to instruct and govern while winning the respect and admiration of his students. He remained at the school over a period of thirteen years. He created a firm foundation for the professional standing of the Normal School that increased its value to the public schools throughout New Hampshire.

## A NEW METHODIST CHURCH

The first Methodist church building stood for forty years on the corner of Main and Bridge streets. The denomination increased until this small edifice was inadequate for the requirements of a growing congregation.

A new building of Gothic design was erected on the east side of Main street south of the Record Office in 1872 at an expense of $20,000. The auditorium seated over three hundred persons and the chapel on the lower floor supplied the facilities for the many functions of the denomination.

With a legacy in the will of Mr. John H. Gill, a bell was hung in the steeple that served for a fire alarm over many years. Mr. Gill was a musician, taught singing schools, a popular evening recreation, and led the choir until his death in 1888.

## THE EXPRESS BUSINESS

The railroad eliminated the stagecoaches with their drivers kindly delivering parcels along their routes. Instead, an express business developed. Mr. James Fogg Langdon, "Uncle Jim" to his scores of friends, joined with Mr. Nathaniel White of Concord and Mr. Benjamin P. Cheney of Peterborough in an express company that operated between Boston and Montreal.

Mr. Langdon erected the house at number 2, at the corner of Highland Street and the new Russell Street, and conducted his express office in one of the small, wooden buildings on the east side of Main Street. These gable roofed houses were called "The Ten Footers" and also "Peanut Row."

This Langdon Family was established in Portsmouth near the beginning of the settlement of Strawberry Banke. Their sons became wealthy shipping merchants and prominent in the government of New Hampshire.

Mr. James Langdon was the descendant of Woodbury Langdon, the brother of John who administered the oath of office to George Washington at his inaugural in 1789. Langdon Street was established before 1900 and perpetuates the name of this prominent family whose enterprising son was influential in the progress of our town during the nineteenth century.

## SECOND HIGHLAND STREET FIRE

Fires furnished excitement all too often in the village. Since 1862 when the first fire swept this corner, another three story wooden block faced Highland Street occupied by the store of Plummer Fox and his several partners. On Main Street was the store of John Tufts. Again, in 1895, fire destroyed the buildings around this corner.

Undiscouraged, Mr. Fox erected a three story brick block along Main Street with space for several stores and halls and offices above. Mr. Tufts constructed a wooden building for his drug store and the Gill Fletcher glove shop on the lower floor along Highland Street, and apartments above.

The Plymouth Record stated that the fire department purchased a hook and ladder truck in 1893, then trained a special force to man it. For a fire alarm, the town paid an annual fee to the Methodist church to sound the calls with its bell. At the next door the fire company was stationed in the same building that is now in 1963, the printing office of the Plymouth Record.

A most troublesome fire partially destroyed the wooden railroad bridge across the Pemigewasset River to the south of the village. Trains were sent over the White River Line until piles were driven to reinforce the bridge.

In December came a sudden rainstorm of thirty-six hours duration that piled the ice into a long jam. The flood washed away the piles under the bridge so that the trains again ran to White River. Fortunately, this situation developed in the winter when tourists were not traveling to the mountains.

One August day in 1893, the newspaper reported that at noon fourteen passenger cars filled with tourists arrived in Plymouth. Again, at 5 P.M. seventeen crowded cars arrived from Boston. The restaurant at the station was prepared to accommodate hundreds of diners daily.

The Pemigewasset Valley branch of the railroad was constructed in 1882 that transported many of these travelers to the hotels in North Woodstock and the Flume House in Franconia Notch.

## SUMMARY

Building the second Pemigewasset Hotel, the Village Improvement Society for the Common, more stores along the Russell Square, the first new Street—Russell, Shamrock Valley, a Town Hall, the Founding of Plymouth Normal School, the new Methodist Church, the Langdon Express Office, and the second fire at Main and Highland streets, all transformed the appearance of the center of the village.

# 1873-1883

## YOUNG LADIES' LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

A group of fourteen young women conceived a plan for a circulating library in 1873. Although they possessed neither money nor books, they took the initiative to secure both. They chose the name, "The Young Ladies Library Association" and elected officers who were daughters of influential business men of the community.

To obtain the funds for books, entertainments, lectures and a fair were offered to the public with generous response for their efforts. Uncle Jim Langdon provided a room over his express office and furnished a stove, fuel and kerosene lamps as his contribution.

The books were purchased and the library opened early in 1874. Patrons paid one dollar annually. Concerts, dramatics and fairs were frequently held that increased the number of new books, until in 1875 Mr. John Bertram of Salem, Massachusetts, a summer guest at the Pemigewasset House, presented $500 to express his admiration for the constant efforts of these young women. Mr. Bertram's picture hangs in the library today.

Hon. Henry W. Blair was a member of the Congress of the United States in 1876. As a successful lawyer and statesman he realized the historical value of the first courthouse of 1774. Accordingly, he purchased what remained of its structure after the abuse it had received when a schoolhouse, paint shop and finally a wheelwright's shelter. The cupola was off, the window frames broken and the doorway defaced, but the original frame was intact.

Mr. Blair obtained the consent of Grafton County officials to remove this relic to county land where it stands today. At an expense of $1,000 the restoration was completed. Then, a lease for ninety-nine years was given to the Young Ladies Library Association in 1876, soon to expire.

Mrs. Harl Pease relates how visitors asked her, while she served as librarian, to point to the exact spot where Daniel Webster stood when he pleaded the case of Josiah Burnham. The Association had recently laid a green carpet that was beginning to show wear from the constant desire to stand on the spot. Miss Bessie placed a table to protect this famous space on the carpet and to the curious visitors she would say, "Probably he stood about

*Young Ladies' Library (Old Courthouse)—1774. Here Daniel Webster earned his first lawyer's fee, in May of 1806.*

where that table is now." Tradition describes a fireplace that originally occupied the northwest corner of the room.

No record remains about a bell in the old cupola. The present cupola of the courthouse of 1889 contains a bell with the inscription around its barrel-top, "Cast by Henry N. Hooper & Co., Boston 1849." This bell was probably hung in the belfry of the second courthouse. Recently, a judge revived the custom of ringing the courthouse bell to call the court into session.

The State of New Hampshire enacted laws that control free public libraries. A combined management of the town and the Association prevails at present, with a board of trustees elected by the town and an appropriation of tax money annually to assist in defraying the running expenses.

## THE STORY ABOUT AMOS M. KIDDER

Kidder Hill was situated on both sides of the line of Hebron and Plymouth. Early in the 1800 period Oliver Kidder and his wife and family of seven children removed to the village of Plymouth where he died in 1854. Mrs. Kidder earned for her children by doing laundry work for her neighbors. She removed to Chelsea, Massachusetts and there her youngest son, Amos, attended schools.

Amos was first a clerk in a store, then went to New York to become a banker and associated with railroad business. Fortune smiled and he founded the banking firm of A.M. Kidder & Co. At the age of thirty-six years, he returned to reside in Plymouth.

A beautiful residence on Highland Street with stables and landscaped lawns was erected. His wife was frail, and he employed servants to care for the home and his son and daughter. He was generous and friendly, although he dressed fastidiously, always carrying a cane.

He kept a span of coal black driving horses, also a tally-ho coach with a coachman dressed in livery, to handle the four spirited horses, with two English Greyhounds dashing in the rear. He bought the Pem Farm at West Plymouth, where he employed a farm manager to grow vegetables and care for his blooded stock, with a large new house and barns provided on the place.

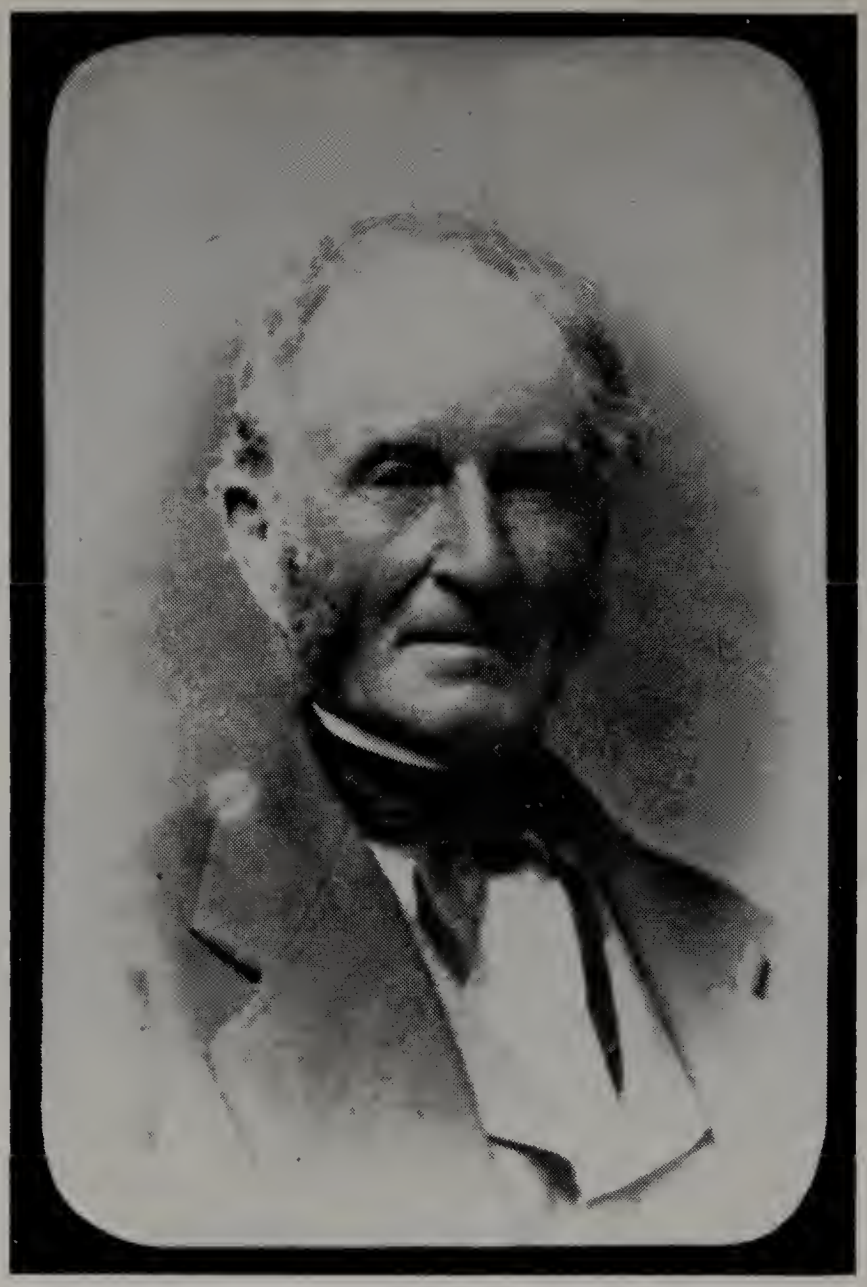
After seven years he bought the east side of Main Street between the Methodist church and Blake's restaurant, razed the buildings and erected the three story brick Kidder Block. The post office, and stores of various goods were displaying their wares through large plate glass windows on the first floor. The center of the second floor was a theatre, extending to the roof, the walls surrounded by balconies and a stage with a hand painted drop curtain depicting the Bay of Naples. Musicals, dramatics, lectures and town meetings freely used this spacious auditorium.

*Amos Mansfield Kidder and grandson Mansfield, 1837 – 1903*

Mr. Kidder was influential in the legislature. He secured $60,000 from the state for a new Normal School building and gave the land now occupied by Mary Lyon Hall for a new wooden dormitory. Every week he ordered the grocery store to carry baskets of food to needy families with no mention of the giver.

Suddenly this largess ended when Mr. Kidder proposed a bond issue to hard surface Main Street to Livermore Falls. Spring mud and summer rains caused this highway to become almost impassable. Critical taxpayers began to object with most unfortunate reminders that Mr. Kidder's mother had been a washerwoman. This kindly man was extremely sensitive and these remarks cut his feeling too deeply for endurance.

Quietly he sold his property in Plymouth and departed, never to return. He died in 1903. Plymouth lost a generous, kindly citizen. When the Kidder Block was destroyed in a fire the memory of this remarkable man disappeared. Yet the Congregational Church building and chapel are monuments to his thoughtfulness and the first savings bank owes its existence to his genius.



*James Fogg Langdon, 1804 – 1887*

## THE TIN SHOP

A business that indicates change was established in one of the ten footers in 1875 by Mr. Charles J. Gould. He kept a hardware store and installed machines for a tin shop. Thus ended the pottery business of West Plymouth. Sheet tin was shaped into milk pans, baking pans and all household basins of all shapes and sizes to the satisfaction of housewives. The tin pedlars' carts became frequent callers at farm houses, taking rags in barter for their utensils.

## THE WATER WORKS

The community was disturbed because a few cases of typhoid fever began to appear in the summertime with increasing frequency, until 1880 brought almost epidemic conditions.

Rose Lawn had become a popular summer hotel. The hostess, Mrs. William G. Hull, was a cultured woman with literary attainments. In October

she contracted this disease and died. Within a few days one of her guests, Mrs. Woodbury Langdon, succumbed. Two weeks later young Frank Langdon, the only child of Woodbury Langdon, was taken by this same illness.

The word, pollution, was not spoken daily as it is heard today. Nevertheless, proof that the springs along Russell Street were infected with the germs of typhoid was undisputed. Rose Lawn immediately closed.

Mr. Woodbury Langdon resolved to prevent another fatality because the water was impure. He persuaded his father, Mr. James Fogg Langdon, to invest thousands of his fortune to establish the water works for the town. Young Langdon was a graduate of Bowdoin College, and a capable business executive. He became the superintendent of the construction of a reservoir on Huckins Hill that would be filled by the hillside brooks. Then the water pipes were laid that brought pure water to the village and supplied fire protection also.

Mr. James F. Langdon died in 1887, leaving his son to continue this task to which he devoted his entire fortune but he bequeathed to his town a legacy of a water supply for future generations.

## PLYMOUTH AND CAMPTON TELEPHONE COMPANY

Modern facilities were expanding rapidly in Plymouth. The area northward through Warren, Lincoln, Littleton and Bethlehem and southward through Center Harbor was included in an incorporation called The Plymouth and Campton Telephone Exchange Company.

Five central offices were maintained. One hundred and thirty miles of pole lines and five hundred miles of wire provided telephone service for over five hundred patrons.

This company had connections with the New England Telegraph and Telephone Company for all toll calls outside of its own area, thus bringing this region of the White Mountains in constant communication with the outside world.

## THE NATIONAL BANK

In this same year, 1881, the successful businessmen of Plymouth and the surrounding towns became stockholders in a national bank with the name that belongs to this town from its pre-historic inheritance, The Pemigewasset National Bank. Probably this Indian Sachem lived here not less than five hundred years ago. Strangers do not correctly pronounce his name. Certainly, something unique is perpetuated among us, whenever we speak the sachem's name.

Seven able directors were chosen. Space in the Pemigewasset Hotel was occupied by the offices until a brick building was erected in 1885 at the south

*Hon. Alvin Burleigh, 1842 – 1930*

side of the Congregational church, displacing the small office building that Squire Leverett had used for his legal practice and the horsesheds of the Old Brick Store.

## LAWYER ALVIN BURLEIGH

Time passes rapidly, bringing new personalities into prominence. One of these was a native son, Alvin Burleigh, another boy who by his own efforts became a successful lawyer and statesman.

Young Burleigh attended the village schools until he enlisted in the Fifteenth Regiment for New Hampshire in the Civil War when still in his teens. After receiving an honorable discharge, he prepared for college at Kimball Union Academy and was graduated from Dartmouth in 1871. He read law in the office of Hon. Henry W. Blair, was admitted to the Bar in 1874, then became a member of the firm of Blair and Burleigh.

After Mr. Blair became a Congressman, Mr. Burleigh joined with Mr. George Herbert Adams in a new partnership of Burleigh and Adams. Mr. Adams was graduated from Dartmouth in 1873. He also read law with Mr. Blair and was admitted to the Bar in 1876. Both of these young men became active in banking, members of the legislature, served on many boards of education, and participated in religious activities of the Methodist Church.

## SUMMARY

This decade saw the Young Ladies Library Association activated, the career of Mr. Amos M. Kidder, J. F. Gould's Tin Shop, construction of the Water Works, the Plymouth and Campton Telephone Exchange Company, the National Bank, and the firm of Burleigh and Adams.

*Haying at "Clarkland" with a span of white horses, in 1920.*

# 1883-1893

## MUSICAL SOCIETIES

This decade marks several outstanding musical events in Plymouth. A clipping from a newspaper of a century ago tells about the "county sings" that Mr. Lowell Mason came to conduct in Plymouth. Mr. Mason was the composer or adapter of many of the church hymns that will never be forgotten: "Blest Be the Tie That Binds," "Joy to the World" and many others. People from all over the county would gather "for musical drill" under the guidance of a distinguished teacher from Boston. The notes rather than words were practiced for musical selections.

"Many of these sings were held in the old Pemigewasset House where one could never fail to be interested in mine host, Mr. Denison R. Burnham, always dressed in his suit of blue with brass buttons, swallow tail coat, buff waistcoat, and a red bandana tie, whether in the office of his hotel or in his place with the singers." (A quote from Mrs. Martha Dana Shepard's clipping.)

As early as 1807 a musical society was incorporated in Plymouth, wrote Mrs. Elizabeth Nelson Blair. After the railroad permitted the singers to assemble for several days of practicing oratorios and opera, these so-called festivals were held from Bethlehem to Plymouth that around 1800 were conducted by Mr. Carl Blaisdell of Laconia or accompanied by Blaisdell's Orchestral Club.

Mr. John Keniston returned from his studies in Boston in 1884 to inspire the singers of his native Plymouth to organize "The Sacred and Secular Choral Society" that Mr. Keniston conducted either in the Congregational church or after 1888 in the Kidder Hall with Mrs. Martha Dana Shepard, pianist, using a Chickering Concert Grand piano, and Miss Rena E. Merrill, organist. Soloists were brought from Boston to assist the chorus of eighty voices singing "The Creation" or "The Messiah."

One of the outstanding events was the presentation of "Pinafore" on the stage in Kidder Hall which received highest acclaim in 1904.

Mr. Keniston was superintendent of schools over a term of eighteen years. In 1907 he organized a joint exhibition given by all of the schools for the first time, with a gathering of old pupils and teachers at the Town Hall.

*John Keniston*

Another service that this versatile musician rendered was to be superintendent of the Sunday School at the Congregational church for many years. He devised a system of attendance cards that are preserved in record books which are most valuable because of the lists of families who were living in Plymouth during this period. Also, as choir leader and organist his contribution to the church services cannot be evaluated when only devotion to a religious task prevails upon a skilled musician to fulfill this position every week over a period of many years.

## THE KENISTON BRASS BAND

Possibly even more famous than his choral societies was the brass band that Mr. Keniston organized in 1902. He gathered the players from a wide territory, taught the younger students to perform on various instruments, and presented band concerts throughout the summer months. This required a bandstand that through his efforts was erected on the village common.

The design of this bandstand was drawn by the grandson of the first New England architect, Charles Bulfinch. The daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin B. Dearborn, Elizabeth, married George Greanleaf Bulfinch, M.D., in Boston. While her son was visiting his aunt, Mrs. Plummer Fox on Russell Street, he learned that a plan for a bandstand was desired. Already a member of the firm of his grandfather, he presented the plan of the present bandstand to Mr. Keniston. The town completed the construction in 1903.

Without doubt the most famous member of this band is Mr. Harold C. Freeman, a cornetist who was a member of the 1st Army Headquarters Band,

*Bulfinch Band Stand, 1903*

later becoming Pershing's Band at General Headquarters in Chaumont, France during World War I. After Mr. Keniston was no longer able to remain the leader, Mr. Freeman assumed this position, that he still fills in 1963.

Mention should not be omitted of the surveying that Mr. Keniston and his sons, Carl and Wendell, recorded throughout the town. No person had the knowledge of the original landmarks as did these three. Their records are a valuable legacy.

## THE UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

To the descendants of the Puritans, the Universalist denomination was anathema, yet their doctrine of universal salvation was spreading widely in 1850. Rev. James H. Shepard, a clergyman of this faith, attempted without success to establish a seminary in the vacant buildings of the Holmes Academy during this period. His desire to organize a Universalist church failed likewise. Other preachers were briefly active before Rev. I. H. Shinn aroused sufficient enthusiasm to build the brick building on North Main Street, now the Church of the Holy Spirit, dedicated on October 28, 1884.

Miss Caroline Leverett, daughter of Squire Leverett, told the tale of how Uncle Jim Langdon, a staunch Universalist, decided to contribute generously toward the building fund. Rhoda, his wife, advised that he present his dona-

tion so quietly that he would not be noticed at the camp meeting where these gifts were being collected. She said, "Now Jim, if you want to give something, give a good respectable sum, but don't stand up and give it publicly just to brag that we have saved a little more than some. Just go up and give it quietly." Uncle Jim followed Rhoda's advice. To his consternation the minister in charge, after inquiring the name of the donor, announced that "Uncle Jim" Langdon had just handed him the sum of whatever he gave. "Oh Lord, Lord! What will Rhoda say when she reads the paper tomorrow," said Uncle Jim.

In 1903, a young graduate, Rev. Bernard C. Ruggles, was successful in his ministry for this church. Gradually the interest waned until the denomination closed the doors of the church.

## DAVIS BAKER KENISTON'S STORE

One of the stores in the new Kidder Block was opened by Davis Baker Keniston from Campton, selling men's clothing. Later the firm became Keniston and Batchelder in the Old Brick Store. Mr. Keniston erected the spacious home now occupied by the President of Plymouth Teachers College on School Street. His son, always called "Baker," was Commissioner of Parks in Boston until his death a few years ago.

## PLYMOUTH ELECTRIC LIGHT COMPANY

The business and professional men of Plymouth, under the provisions of voluntary corporation laws of the state, organized a company to generate electricity. In 1891, they erected a plant between the railroad tracks and the river, named the Electric Station, with facilities to generate power for arc and incandescent lights. Soon the pictures of the streets show those early arc lights swinging above the intersections, that cast their wide circles and shadows across the highways.

## THE VENEER COMPANY

Another corporation of several businessmen operated to the south of the railroad station, The Plymouth Veneer Company. From poplar and other woods the thin material for strawberry baskets and similar containers was produced over a period of ten years. Approximately forty employees carried on this business that closed in 1901.

## THE PLYMOUTH RECORD

Every town needs a newspaper yet attempts to establish a successful sheet had failed. Mr. Thomas J. Walker arrived in Plymouth in 1886. He was a

native of Illinois, thirty years of age, and had been employed in various offices in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Walker purchased the Grafton County Journal and the Grafton County Democrat, and merged the two under the name of the Plymouth Record in 1887. The printing office was located in the beautiful building that formerly housed the offices of the railroad near the station in Railroad Square. Later the business was removed to the Rollins Building on Main Street. After eight years Mr. Walker sold to Mr. E. A. Chase and Mr. Charles Wright.

This weekly newspaper was republican in politics, devoted to the progressive spirit of the town, and filled its eight pages with local news that brought increasing subscribers to become a successful local newspaper.

## THE VILLAGE COMMON

Until 1892 the land between the circle of streets called Russell Square was the property of George C. Spaulding, Frank W. Russell and the Congregational church. This sloping space had been graded and a fence surrounded it. To prevent public ownership, Mr. Russell closed the cross walks to the public at stated intervals.

At the town meeting on March 8, 1892 the selectmen were authorized to purchase this common and lay it out for a public park. The property was taken for this purpose and damages were paid to the Russell Family of $750, to Mr. Spaulding $275 and to the church $50, as recorded in the Registry of Deeds at the County Courthouse in Woodsville. After the Keniston Brass Band was organized, permission was granted to place the Bulfinch bandstand where it remains today.

## FRATERNAL ORGANIZATIONS

From early years, organizations have been popular in Plymouth. From 1803 when the Masonic Lodge opened with the Rev. Robert Fowle of Holderness as the first Master, and the musical societies of 1808 to the present day, scores of orders by as many names have flourished.

The Plymouth Lodge, I.O.O.F. No. 66, with George A. Robie the Grand Master, was instituted in 1881; the Justice B. Penniman Post, G.A.R. in 1879; the Baker's River Lodge, Knights of Pythias in 1896, and the Plymouth Grange in 1896.

The Eastern Star began in 1892, the Daughters of Rebekah in 1892, and the Penniman Relief Corps in 1882, that comprised the membership of the women in the above groups.

The Masons met in several halls that were destroyed by fires together with their properties, with the exception of their records. The Odd Fellows

and Knights occupied separate halls in the Tufts Block until this burned. The Kidder hall on the third floor became the Masonic rooms, and the Fox Block was used by the Odd Fellows.

## PLYMOUTH GUARANTY SAVINGS BANK

This savings bank was incorporated in 1889 with a Board of Trustees of eleven men and a guarantee fund of $25,000. The first president was Mr. Charles H. Bowles who came to Plymouth in 1851, the progenitor of a family that has held prominent positions in the town to the present day.

The bank has conducted its business in the same building with the Pemigewasset National Bank and occupies equal space in the new building today.

After seventy-five years of successful management, the security of the deposits are insured by an increased Guaranty Fund against loss.

## THE FIRST COAL DEALER

On North Main street, about on the lot where the Plymouth Furniture store is today, was the home of Joseph P. Huckins. He was listed as "the pioneer coal dealer." The age-old fuel was still wood, then purchased at about three dollars per cord, and chunks were less expensive.

For their living-rooms, many possessed soap stone stoves. Inch thick slabs of this stone were set into an iron framework with a hinged top that lifted to admit a chunk of hard wood into its two feet square interior. Once heated, this remained so throughout the winter.

But the railroad soon brought carloads of coal. Mr. Huckins changed his business to furniture in the Kidder Block with fire insurance as an extra side line.

Coal as a kitchen fuel did not meet with immediate favor with the housewives. When they did accept it for winter, they removed the brick linings of the fireboxes and returned to wood in the summer months.

The evolution of the kitchen stove after the fireplaces were out-of-date is difficult to describe. The first iron cook stoves were two feet square, set upon four short legs, with two or four round openings in the top that were filled with covers that could be removed to place fuel in the front firebox or for setting kettles directly over the fire. The oven was above and in back of this stove, resting on the top edge with two long legs for supports at the back. This was an oblong iron box around the stove pipe with doors on either side. This resembled a flight of steps: from the top of the oven to the top of the stove, to the front hearth, to the floor.

Ten years later appeared the same stove, set higher with the oven under-

neath the firebox, a better baker but low for the housewife to use the oven. Lastly, came the six cover range with the hot water tank on the rear, still in use today.

## SUMMARY

This decade enjoyed musical societies, Keniston's Brass Band, the Bulfinch Bandstand, the Universalist church, a Davis Keniston drygoods store, the Plymouth Electric Light Company, the veneer mill, the beginning of the Plymouth Record, the Village Common, the Fox and Mason stores, the development of fraternal organizations, the Plymouth Guaranty Savings Bank and the first coal dealer.

*Miss Miriam E. Keniston modelling the 1856 wedding gown of Mrs. Cyrus Keniston.*

# 1893-1903

## EMILY BALCH COTTAGE HOSPITAL

The rapidly increasing skills in the medical profession and the professional nurse created a widespread demand for hospitals. From a small beginning in 1892, by the determination of a few women, a hospital opened in Plymouth.

In Holderness on the terrace opposite the Holderness School, "Woodlands," the beautiful estate of the Balch Family of English lineage, stood until it was destroyed by fire in 1910. Here lived Miss Catherine Holmes Balch, a young woman who originated the idea that a place must be provided for the ill.

With the enthusiasm that she generated among a few women of Plymouth, a fund of $700.00 was earned or solicited that engaged a room in the home of Mrs. Caleb Ames, on the road to Pulsifer Hill in Holderness, where several patients were treated in 1896.

With persistence, these women and six courageous men incorporated the Emily Balch Cottage Hospital Association, named for the mother of Miss Catherine, in 1899. With a gift of $500.00 from Mr. and Mrs. J. Randolph Coolidge of Sandwich added to the first $700.00, a house was purchased with this down payment and a $900.00 mortgage. This is the house that remains at 47 Highland street today.

The upper floor was renovated to furnish the two front rooms for a men's ward and a women's ward. The kitchen became the operating room and the pantry a drug room. There was a small room for the resident nurse, a small waiting room, a drug room in the shed, and a staircase from the ground for an entrance.

One trained nurse, Miss Jones, was employed, with duties of twenty-four hours to care for the ill if in the hospital or to be a District Nurse for outside cases. The first six months she cared for four patients in the hospital, five outside, and made calls on six cases. Miss Jones resigned frequently, then at the entreaty of a persuasive trustee, she stayed about two years. She did not have the use of a telephone or electric lights and the supplies depended upon gifts at donation days and the generosity of citizens. Her only

assistants were neighborhood women in the waiting room; not even a cleaning maid eased her burdens.

To appreciate conditions sixty years ago, the story about an operation will cause astonishment today when antiseptics and tranquilizers are necessities.

Young Bessie Fox, about sixteen years of age, was in the waiting room while the nurse was assisting in the operating room where an abdominal tumor was being removed from an aged patient. The case was prolonged beyond expectation. The surgeon called for ether and through a sliding window directed Miss Fox to search on the top shelf of the drug room. She found the ether, then was summoned to bring a kerosene lamp into the operating room, and to hold the lighted lamp above the patient. "What if I faint?" asked Bessie. Thundered the surgeon, "You cannot faint." She was cautioned that ether was inflammable, yet as the darkness increased, she was ordered to hold the lamp closer to the patient.

When the ordeal was over and the patient removed from the room, the nurse collapsed. Miss Bessie mopped the floor and cleared up the utensils, then staggered home to Russell street. Plummer Fox was thoroughly angered to learn that his young daughter was subjected to this terrific endurance test. The patient recovered to live longer in Campton.

Such were the problems of the Association. Then a new element caused more trials. A young, capable graduate of the Dartmouth Medical College, Dr. Ernest L. Bell from North Woodstock, opened his own hospital in a house at 65 Highland street, in 1904. Such was the situation at the close of this decade.

## THE ROLLINS BUILDING

In 1893, Mr. Frank H. Rollins erected the building that still bears his name, on Main street opposite the Common. The ten-footers that occupied the site were removed to the north side of Bridge street where they remain in 1963.

Mr. Rollins was born in Ashland, was graduated from the Normal School in 1872 and at Tilton Seminary. He removed to Philadelphia to engage in the insurance business with his brother, then went to Chicago. In failing health, he returned to Plymouth to continue his insurance work and enter glove manufacturing.

One store on the lower floor of his building was occupied by his furniture business; the other by the fruit store of Mr. Gaspar Borella, a native of Italy. This was the period when oranges were coming to this country by

shiploads and the banana groves in the West Indies were producing quantities of bunches for the trade in the U.S.A.

Mr. Borella used the translation of his name, Police, in his business. In 1903 he and his wife and six children visited Italy for the winter. A son, Ben V., who was born in Plymouth in 1891, was graduated with honors in 1915 at Dartmouth. He became General Assistant Treasurer of General Motors Corporation in New York City. A son, Victor Gaspar, born in Plymouth in 1906, was graduated at Dartmouth in 1930 and is now Director of Industrial Relations at Rockefeller Center in New York City.

Although under the name of another family, the Volpes, this store has promoted the trade in fruit through seven decades in the Rollins Block.

Successors to Mr. Borella in the fruit business were the brothers, Daniel and Charles Volpe, members of the Volpe Family who were famous fruit importers at Winchester, Massachusetts. The quality of their merchandise was known far and wide over a radius of fifty miles. Mr. Daniel Volpe began a second store in a new block about 1936 that he conducted until illness compelled him to retire. Mr. Charles Volpe removed to Holly Hill, Florida, leaving his son, Angelo, in Plymouth, a graduate of New Hampshire University and an expert in radios. The son of Daniel Volpe, Paul, is a successful lawyer in Rhode Island.

*Mrs. Henry William Blair*

## THE PEMIGEWASSET WOMAN'S CLUB

During the Civil War women learned to work together in the Sanitary Commission. Next, temperance, suffrage and education influenced them to continue to seek for activities that promoted community betterment.

Several groups in New Hampshire caught the spirit of a group in New York with the idea of a woman's club, around 1893. One of the leaders was Mrs. Henry W. Blair, native of Plymouth, then residing in Manchester, who was the wife of the United States senator. These clubs formed a Federation in 1895 with Mrs. Blair as the President. She decided to appoint a meeting at the Pemigewasset House in Plymouth on July 12, 1897.

Mrs. Alfred Campbell, the wife of the Principal of Plymouth Normal School, invited the influential women of the town to Normal Hall to offer the idea that before this meeting convened in July, a woman's club ought to be organized in the town. On June 26, 1897, the Pemigewasset Woman's Club became a fact with Mrs. Alvin Burleigh as its president.

Mrs. Blair was a woman with ideals that she had learned from her Methodist minister father. She immediately developed a program based upon philanthropic and educational efforts with conservation soon added to the list. The New Hampshire Federation of Women's Clubs today is following the program that Mrs. Blair instituted in 1896 – 1898.

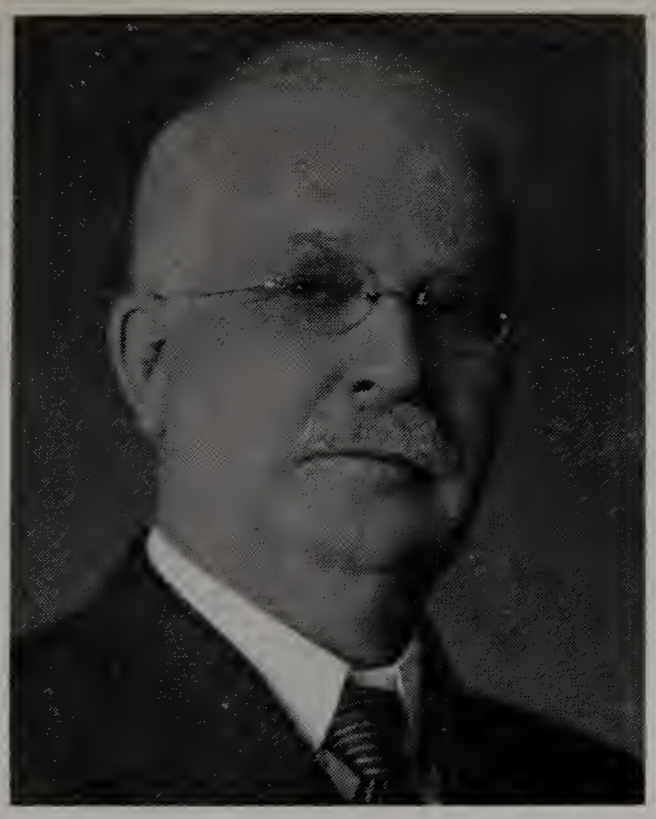
The Pemigewasset Woman's Club immediately began to think about the betterment of the community. They organized a lecture course that brought such famous speakers as Russell Conwell with his "Acres of Diamonds," May Alden Ward and Prof. Francis Richardson of Dartmouth that filled the Kidder Hall at a price of thirty-five cents per ticket.

One of the lasting projects for the use of their funds was to illuminate the town clock in the tower of Rounds Hall. One of the questions asked in 1962 is how did the town become the owner of this clock? Probably, when the town purchased the Holmes Plymouth Academy, this is the clock that was then in the tower and was placed in Rounds Hall in 1896. No records can be discovered that the town purchased a clock otherwise. The fact that the bell is dated at the time when the Academy tower was erected bears out this idea.

## THE DRAPER-MAYNARD COMPANY

In the year 1900 an industry that brought growth to Plymouth was established, the Draper-Maynard Sporting Goods Company.

The first member of the Draper Family in Plymouth settled on the Intervale before 1776. He was a soldier in the Revolution, named Jacob. His son, Nathaniel, lived on Ward Hill, married Mary Gill and among his



*Jason F. Draper, 1850 – 1913*

*John E. Maynard, 1846 – 1937*

seven children were Jason C. and Nathaniel Fletcher. They were the same age as Alvah McQuesten and when they were young men, they became glove manufacturers in Plymouth, then in Bristol.

Nathaniel Fletcher had a son, Jason Fletcher, born in Plymouth in 1850. He followed in the glove business.

Meanwhile John F. Maynard was born in Loudon, attended business college in Manchester, then studied architecture and became a contractor and builder, with his uncle, John Maynard, in Manchester.

In 1875 he formed a partnership with Jason Fletcher Draper in the firm of Draper-Maynard Company at Glove Hollow. With Mr. Draper managing the factory and Mr. Maynard in the selling line, their business increased rapidly.

A tannery was purchased in Ashland, a factory and storehouses were erected in that town, and the business flourished there for nine years. Mr. Draper married Hattie C. Russell, the daughter of Pelatiah Russell, who was manufacturing gloves in Plymouth. Mr. Maynard married first Harriet E. Draper who died in 1879, then her sister, Henrietta F. Draper, the daughters of Nathaniel F. Draper and sisters of Jason F., his partner.

When the firm decided to enlarge their plant, naturally they purchased a site in Plymouth. Between the Universalist church and the Plymouth Town Hall was a vacant space on Main Street where the large wooden factory, 104

*First Draper, Maynard Factory, 1900*

feet in length and three stories high, was constructed by Mr. Maynard in 1900.

The glove business had then become over-crowded, but a new line was making rapid strides. Baseball was becoming a popular game, but played barehanded. Arthur Irwin, who was a skilled baseball player, designed a padded glove that he brought to the factory in Ashland. He persuaded the firm to manufacture and sell his idea. Mr. Maynard traveled across the country advertising this glove with such success that Draper-Maynard Company added other lines of sporting goods that required a staff of fifty men and twenty-five women.

About 1910, the factory burned in a night. Immediately a brick building, four stories high rose from the ashes, business increased and a larger force of employees was necessary. This brought many families to Plymouth. High and Emerson Streets were opened and other streets extended into the suburbs.

Over the doorway on Main Street hung a figure of a dog, said to have been modelled by Mr. Draper's hound, and named "The Lucky Dog." This became the trade mark and Lucky Dog baseballs and gloves, then sweaters and other sports' garments were found in stores everywhere.

The national baseball leagues demanded baseballs by the hundreds. Women learned to sew the covers and skilled employees became expert in gauging the weight and the perfect shape of a baseball in their hands.

On Pleasant street, the Draper Home and the John and Edward Maynard houses and other Victorian dwellings were erected, and cottage houses belonging to employees rapidly increased in numbers. "The Draper-Maynard Company was like one big family," to quote the words of a citizen in 1925.

There is an old wives' saying, "The big fish eat up the little ones." Athletics in colleges, high schools, cities and hamlets became one of the major industries of the nation. Competition by big business in sporting goods ate up the little ones. Although the Draper-Maynard Company added football and golf supplies to its products, gradually competition and other forces overcame the company.

Mr. Draper died in a few years. Mr. Maynard lived to be ninety-one years of age in 1937. Soon after the business closed its doors. The wives of these families were influential in church, club, and social work. Their generosity was adequate to the wants of the community.

## THE PEG AND BOBBIN MILL

Two young men arrived in Plymouth in 1898 to erect a plant for manufacturing split wooden shoe pegs and bobbins. Mr. Edward J. and Mr. George R. were sons of Mr. Jacob Foster of Shelburne Falls, Massachusetts who was owner of several mills in other localities.

Several acres of meadow land were purchased near the mouth of the Baker River for the site of the mills and for homes of the employees.

The elder brother was already married to Miss Mabel L. Jenks of Shelburne Falls and soon the younger married Miss Christabel Allen of Littleton, New Hampshire. They erected spacious homes on North Main Street, overlooking the Pemigewasset River and across to Mount Prospect.

The responsibility was divided with Edwin J. as the accountant and manager; and George R. as the machinist who had invented several improvements to the complicated machines that produced 300 bushels of shoe pegs per day. Later, 15,000 bobbins were turned in the mill daily.

The shoe pegs were purchased by factories in this country, but were also ordered by thousands by European shoe industries. Gradually the American shoe industry ceased to order wooden pegs. After the second World War, the demand decreased until the mills in Plymouth closed and only the factory in Bartlett continued with Mr. George R. Foster the manager. New materials substituted for wooden pegs and the business closed entirely.

The Draper, Maynard Company purchased the property in 1922 for an

extension of the business. In 1936 the United Shank & Findings Company of the United Shoe Manufacturing Corporation acquired the mill and have operated there since that year.

Both of these brothers and their wives participated in the religious and civic affairs of the village. Mr. Edwin J. possessed a fine bass voice that was heard in the choir of the Congregational church over the years. Mr. George R. was active in the dramatic societies that produced amateur plays in the Kidder Music Hall. Both were directors in the Pemigewasset National Bank and held the chairs in the fraternal organizations. Their advice in civic business was sought continually.

## PLYMOUTH HIGH SCHOOL

The following excerpts are copied from a historical address by Miss Caroline W. Mudgett and Mrs. Ruth McClure Chase that was delivered at the dedication ceremony of the first High School building in 1904.

"The history of Plymouth High School falls into three periods. The first was in the old schoolhouse, half way up Court Street, made of the old Holmes Academy building. In 1883 when Plymouth High School was organized, it sheltered the entire Normal School, the High School and the grades for the village schools of Plymouth.

"The school was an integrant part of the Normal School, under the direction of its principal. A single teacher presided over the High School room and taught the branches not included in the Normal curriculum. In other studies we recited with the Normals.

"The course was of three years and Latin was the only foreign language. The laboratories were poorly equipped, the library meager. The graduates numbered sixty-six, scattered from Maine to California: doctors, lawyers, teachers, mothers, all better for those High School years.

"The second period began in September, 1891 when the school transferred to the new Normal building at the top of the hill and for a decade remained a part of the Training School.

"In September, 1893, a man was appointed in the position of High School Principal thus placing the discipline in the hands of its own teacher, aided by one assistant. Gradually, even in classes conducted by Normal instructors, the two schools were separated.

"The curriculum was being constantly revised. In June 1896, for the first time, a class was graduated from a full four years course with four years of Latin, two of French, and other studies to meet the requirements of college entrance.

"Mr. Jenks, the second principal, introduced recreational trips to New-

found Lake and to the summit of Mount Prospect. These years saw the formation of the first baseball team and football with interscholastic contests. In the late '90's and early 1900's the Plymouth High School had graduates at Dartmouth, Harvard, West Point, Boston University and Wesleyan, also at Smith, Wellesley, Vassar, Radcliffe and Mt. Holyoke, and others attending the best finishing schools.

"In 1901, a strange change happened. The High School wearily climbed the steep stairs in the Kidder Block for three years.

"Now, the class of 1904 is holding its graduation in the new High School Building. Now the School is entirely separated from the Normal School with a faculty that provides a teacher for every department."

## SUMMARY

Opening the Emily Balch Cottage Hospital, the Rollins Building and Fruit Store of Mr. Gaspar (Police) Borella, the Pemigewasset Woman's Club, The Draper, Maynard Company in Plymouth, the Fosters' Wooden Peg and Bobbin Mill, and the Development of Plymouth High School.

*The Red Sox baseball team visited the D&M factory in 1916, and the famous Babe Ruth is shown above attempting to sew the cover on a baseball.*

# 1903 - 1913

This might be considered the decade of changes in recreation, transportation, and national and international viewpoints.

Motion picture films were displayed in Music Hall in the Kidder building, four evenings per week, at the price of ten cents per person with the exception of special attractions. William Farhnum was the hero of Western horsemanship and Marguerite Clark the drawing card for romance. Then Mary Pickford became the "Sweetheart of the Screen" with twenty-five cents per ticket for her programs.

Ford cars were popular and the newspaper announced that H. E. Berry was "trying-out a Buick." The one hindrance was clouds of dust behind every car. Men wore tightfitting caps and goggles while women swathed their heads in yards of veiling and everybody wore dusters.

Nationally, Theodore Roosevelt was a popular President with his "big-stick" policies. Internationally, Kaiser William, Emperor of Germany, was causing some nervous fears in France and England because he was drilling a military force in central Europe with sinister possibilities.

In Plymouth, business was prospering with the beginning of the new era. Nobody can recall who first offered gasoline for sale or who opened the first beauty parlor a half century ago.

Two families arrived in the town that maintain successful places of business in 1963: the Samaha and the Saliba Families. Also, a religious element, the Catholic Church, was inaugurated by several families from Ireland.

## THE SAMAHA FAMILY

Approximately sixty-five years ago the ancestor of the Samaha Family in Plymouth arrived in Massachusetts, a member of the Samaha Clan of Lebanon in Asia. A son, Abdelnour, opened a dry goods store in Laconia on the site of the present Woolworth store in 1905. Three years later, he removed to Plymouth to establish his store in the block that Mr. Walter Mason erected in 1878, afterward purchased by Mr. Cyrus Sargent, known as the Sargent Block on the corner of Main and Bridge streets.

Mr. Samaha married Miss Madeleine Samaha who came to Plymouth in 1921, after graduating from the British Junior College, a Quaker institution

in Beirut, Syria. This couple continued to operate their dry goods store until the death of Mr. Samaha in 1959. Mrs. Samaha has carried on the business, although she was compelled to move to 117 Main street in the Edgar Block when the Sargent Block was condemned and razed recently. She carries lines of goods of established quality that this firm has stocked over the years.

The four children of this couple are graduates of New Hampshire University, the University of Beirut and Harvard. One is a successful dentist in Concord. A daughter is employed in teaching at the Marine School at Quantico, Virginia, and another daughter is on the faculty at Plymouth Teachers College. The other son is in the shoe business in Haverhill, Massachusetts.

In 1910, two brothers of Abdelnour, Ameen and Louis, came to Plymouth. Ameen opened a grocery store on Main street opposite the Plymouth Inn, which he continued until his death.

Louis Samaha built his store on Bridge street, gradually extended the building to Main street and now on the same site, his son, Norman, operates the oldest established grocery business in Plymouth. His children are graduates of Plymouth High School, have returned to Lebanon for study, and attended New Hampshire University.

The son of a sister, Mrs. Rahegie Samaha, is Clerk of the Superior Court for Grafton County, Mr. Unwar Samaha.

The Samahas are loyal members of the Episcopal Church. The late Mrs. Louis Samaha is gratefully remembered for her kindness and generosity for all good causes in the community.

## THE SALIBA FAMILY

The Saliba Family emigrated to the United States about 1895 from Betegreen, a mountain village in Lebanon, Asia. Through frugality and persistence, success has resulted for their enterprises.

The first to arrive in Plymouth was George Ferris Saliba. Then his brother, Adib Moses Saliba and family settled on a farm at Campton Bog. After eight years, the family moved to Plymouth and began a small grocery store in a building opposite the D.&M. Factory. By gradually increasing his merchandise and dealing in lumber, his financial success permitted Mr. Saliba to change his business to dry goods.

About ten years ago, the residence on High street that was the home of Mr. Samuel Cummings Webster and later of his daughter, Winnie, was purchased by the Saliba Family. There the aged parents were cared for.

The son, Moses, Jr., graduated from New Hampshire University, then joined in the dry goods business at "The Style Center" on Main street. Since the death of Mr. Moses Saliba, Sr., the former business is continued by Mrs. Saliba.

*Railroad Square and the Second Pemigewasset House that was destroyed by fire in 1909.*
*(See page 82.)*

Soon after Mr. Moses, Sr., died, Plymouth Teachers College purchased the property on High street and a modern home has been erected on Ward Hill where the view over the river valley recalls the landscape of the mountains of Lebanon, their ancestral home.

## ST. MATTHEW CATHOLIC CHURCH

The pioneer family of St. Matthew Parish was Mr. and Mrs. Edward Coffee who arrived from Boston in 1859. They were joined by Mr. and Mrs. Maurice C. Condon in 1880. Mr. and Mrs. Felix McCarthy came from Ireland in 1890.

Missionaries from Tilton conducted the first Catholic services in 1901 at the home of Mr. Coffee. St. Matthew Parish became a mission of Ashland in 1904.

The congregation increased in numbers that could be no longer accommodated in homes. The Universalist church was closed at that time and this edifice served for the parish masses during the next three or four years.

A lot was purchased on January 3, 1911 on School street. A year and a half later, the beautiful edifice, St. Matthew Catholic Church, was dedicated on October 12, 1912 by Bishop Georges Albert Guertin.

The first pastor, Rev. John Matthew Brewen, was appointed on August 1, 1916. In the influenza epidemic, Father Brewen died on October 12, 1918. During the next three years the parish was administered by the pastor in Ashland.

The Rev. Michael R. Griffin was appointed pastor and the rectory at the corner of Highland and Langdon streets was purchased in July, 1919.

## THE PEMIGEWASSET FIRE

One forenoon in 1909, the attic of the Pemigewasset Hotel was blazing. The wind was blowing from the northwest and the water pressure, with only a hose attached to the hydrants, did not raise a stream to the necessary height to quench the flames.

The hotel was doomed. Fanned by the wind, embers blew across the Pemigewasset River to ignite the grass on the meadows, then the woodlands over a mile distant. Soon the buildings on the Byron Smith farm near "Seven Pines," were consumed. The slash from pine logging along the road to Union Bridge burned until midnight. The express train to Montreal was finally permitted to pass along the track with the protection of a stream of water covering its length.

Many of the three-score-and-ten generation recall incidents of that conflagration. Possibly the boys of the High School were personally concerned because Principal Wallace, strict disciplinarian, was about to suspend those

boys who did not return to school in the afternoon. His indignation was appeased after he discovered that these boys were rescuing the extensive library that Mrs. Josiah Elliott had accumulated in her suite as well as valuable furnishings that she cherished.

## MODEL SCHOOL BUILDING

The increased population crowded the schools until the grades could no longer be accommodated in Rounds Hall. This was the problem of the Town of Plymouth to solve with a new grade school building.

In review of the village district, for a period after the courthouse was erected on Main street, the village children attended school in the old courthouse. Then a schoolhouse was erected on South Main street, about in the location of the parking lot for the present First National Store.

When the village district arranged to pay to the State the amount annually raised by taxation to transfer the pupils to the practice school for the Normal School, Rounds Hall, then Livermore Hall, provided school rooms.

A committee was appointed, consisting of Mr. Charles J. Gould, Mr. John Keniston and Mr. H. Bart Heath, to construct a "Model School" building and so faithfully did these men accomplish their task that after forty years this structure was found "without deviation of half an inch."

The site on the corner of School and Summer streets was occupied by the house now at 24 Emerson street, purchased and removed by Mr. Fred Brown. The plans were the latest in scientific principles for ventilation, but said to be a most dangerous fire trap idea in 1945. The windows were high and large because in 1910 artificial lights were considered most unsuitable. Two large study rooms, with small classrooms on two sides, were then supposed to be the best arrangement, because one critic teacher was expected to supervise several student teachers in one period and keep an eye on the study room.

The total expense in 1910 was $40,556.25. Certainly this structure, after fifty years of use by thousands of youngsters, has proved its value.

For a number of years after the new grade school building was erected in 1939, this building was closed. Again in 1950, the increased enrollment made it obligatory that the Model School be remodelled. The interior was divided into four large and several small rooms and wide corridors extended from the front to rear for safety should fire endanger the pupils. The basement was arranged for a hot lunch cafeteria and assembly room. The building was called "The Memorial School" after 1950. The upper grades have occupied these quarters to 1963. Again increased enrollment creates renewed complications.

## SALE OF "THE OLD BRICK"

A century and more saw the name of Russell displayed upon a mercantile sign in the center of the Village since Moor Russell opened his store on the site of No. 16, Highland street. In 1910 Major Frank Webster Russell, grandson of Moor Russell, sold the "Old Brick" to Mr. Joseph Tuttle, owner of the Plymouth Inn who intended to remodel the building for an inn. Soon again another owner, Mr. Moses A. Batchelder, in company with his brother, Bennett, established a store for the sale of men's furnishings in the Old Brick that continued during another thirty years until the United States Government bought the corner for the new Post Office.

## DR. ERNEST L. SILVER

After serving as Principal of the Normal School since 1900, Mr. James E. Klock was succeeded in 1911 by Dr. Ernest L. Silver of Derry. Dr. Silver previously was principal of Pinkerton Academy and Superintendent of Schools at Portsmouth.

Among his teachers at Pinkerton was a young man whom Dr. Silver regarded so highly that he persuaded him to teach psychology at Plymouth. Robert Frost and his family occupied the house at the corner of Highland Avenue and School street with Dr. Silver, since Mrs. Silver was too ill to move to Plymouth at this time.

Mr. Frost was then writing the poems that were included in his first publication, "A Boy's Will." Although Dr. Silver regretted that Mr. Frost decided to live in England for a time, he assisted the poet in his decision. In his biographies, Mr. Frost acknowledges that the encouragement that he received from Dr. Silver was the incentive that from the beginning of his career has urged him on to the fame that Mr. Frost now enjoys.

In the book of poems, "North of Boston," Mr. Frost describes the winter walk that he enjoyed at the top of Ward Hill in a poem, "Good Hours." His poem, "The Road Not Taken," expresses his decision to leave Plymouth. In the book, "A Mountain Intervale," the poem, "Brown's Descent," actually happened down Bridgewater Hill. These are facts that are of interest to Plymouth.

## THE DRAPER-MAYNARD FIRE

Within a few months after the ruins of the Pemigewasset Hotel disfigured Main street at Russell Square, about midnight in May, 1910 the top floor of the Draper-Maynard factory was in flames. This large, wooden building could not be saved with the apparatus then available. The buildings on either side, the Universalist church and the Town or Cook Hall, remained

*The Lucky Dog trade mark above the doorway on Main Street.*

intact on the following morning when the factory was only a heap of smoking debris.

Mr. Maynard immediately erected the brick factory that is now on the same site, making arrangements for the several departments on the three floors. Soon the "Lucky Dog" over the doorway proved a true mascot for a thriving business of sporting goods while the two founders survived.

## THIRD PEMIGEWASSET HOTEL

Fifty years ago, in 1912, a corporation erected the third Pemigewasset Hotel. By way of a reminder, the first Pemigewasset Hotel opened in 1843, the second in 1863.

The beautiful residence that Mr. Amos Kidder erected on Highland street was purchased from the estate of Mr. Carlos Morse, the manager of the second Pemigewasset Hotel for a number of years, together with several acres that had belonged to the Russell Family. Next, one wing of the Normal Hall was moved to the east of this lot and the space between the Morse residence and Normal Hall wing was filled with a two story section that contained the lobby on the first floor and guest rooms above.

The lower floor of the wing provided a dining room. Wide verandas on the north side afforded a view of the mountains and the valley of the Pemigewasset. Mr. Josiah Elliott became the landlord.

THIRD PEMIGEWASSET HOTEL, 1912 – 1958

NORMAL HALL

LOBBY

AMOS M. KIDDER'S HOME

Mr. Elliott, known as "Joe" to his wide acquaintance, was the son of Jacob, a landlord in Lisbon. At the age of fifteen years, he was beginning his career at the Profile House in Franconia Notch. Six years after, he with his brother, Seth, was managing the Flume House. In 1900, he transferred to the Deer Park Hotel in North Woodstock in the summer and to the Pemigewasset the remainder of the year. No landlord surpassed him in popularity.

Plymouth was "The Gateway to the White Mountains." Guests arrived by train, remained a month or longer, enjoyed trips to the Old Man by stagecoach or with a span of horses and carriage, before automobiles became popular and the highways were covered with macadam surface, about 1918. During another ten years, tourists, in their own machines, filled the house for brief stays until the cabins became scattered throughout the mountains. The hotel business gradually vanished.

## ONE HUNDRED FIFTY YEARS

No event in the history of the Town of Plymouth surpassed the three days of celebration of the one hundred fiftieth birthday since the charter was granted. Twelve committees were appointed to plan every phase of this program. The Town was represented by Mr. John Keniston, Mr. Charles J. Gould, Mr. Edward A. Chase, Mrs. S. Katharine Adams and Mrs. Bessie Fox Pease.

Historical exhibits were the responsibility of Mrs. George H. Adams; Miss Millicent Weeks, now Mrs. Frank Foster, and Mrs. David B. Keniston.

Sunday commemorated the religious history with a service on the Common that presented a program of music by a chorus of ladies and a solo by Miss Wilhelmina R. Keniston, the talented daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Keniston, organist and leader of the band.

A sermon was read by Rev. B. A. Dumm, Ph.D., pastor of the Congregational Church, that was delivered on July 4, 1825, by Rev. Jonathan Ward, son of the first minister in the town, Rev. Nathan Ward.

On Monday, in the evening, a historical lecture was read by Rev. C. W. Wilson, pastor of the Congregational Church, with illustrations by slides prepared by Mr. George G. Clark.

On the fifteenth of July, the date of the birthday, a most elaborate Pageant of Plymouth was presented by scores of citizens of all ages. At that time, the corner of Highland Avenue and High Street was a vacant field with a grove of tall pines on the north side. This was the stage. The audience, numbering hundreds, sat on the bank facing High Street, an ideal natural theater. Twelve Episodes in the History of Plymouth were enacted in costumes of their period, with appropriate musical interludes by the Keniston Band.

The historical material for each Episode was prepared by Miss Caroline W. Mudgett who through the years was a student of the evolution of the growth of Plymouth.

The final evening program was a band concert with Mr. John Keniston, as Director, followed by fireworks on the lawn of the old Pemigewasset Hotel.

Also on that evening the Town Clock in the tower of Rounds Hall, then called Livermore Hall, was illuminated for the first time. The expense of this change from black clock faces and the electric work was met by the funds that were gained from the lectures that the Pemigewasset Woman's Club promoted and by money that was remaining after the celebration.

## SUMMARY

The Samaha Family, the Style Center, Saliba Family, the Catholic Church, fire at the Pemigewasset House, the Model School Building, Sale of the Old Brick, Dr. Silver and Robert Frost, the Draper-Maynard Fire, and the 150th Celebration of Plymouth completing 150 years of the history of the Town of Plymouth.

*Plymouth Agricultural Fair Grounds, 1911.* *(See page 87.)*

# 1913-1923

A century and a half since the Proprietors gathered in the meetinghouse at Hollis, Plymouth was a thriving town. The factories were prospering. The educational institutions were offering excellent courses both in the High School and in the Normal School. The methods that Dr. Silver introduced gained a reputation that earned the highest rating in the country. The commercial enterprises attracted trade from a radius of twenty-five miles. Tourists came to the hotels in increasing numbers.

Recreation found a new definition with the automobile permitting commuting for families to build cottages on the shore of the lakes. Golf and swimming became household topics, especially for women who ventured to drive cars.

## THE HIGH SCHOOL FIRE

Early one morning in 1914, young Glea L. Rand was walking to open the store in the Tufts Block, when he saw smoke curling from the basement of the High School building. Immediately he gave the alarm, but the smouldering fury was too widespread through the interior and the building was destroyed.

Especially deplorable was the loss of many copies of Stearns' History of Plymouth, lately published and in storage for the time. The price was then $3.50 for the two volumes, incredible in 1962.

Immediately bonds were issued to erect the present High School building with two floors for classrooms and an assembly hall on the third floor.

## MARY LYON HALL

An article in *The Plymouth Record* of November 18, 1916, recalls the day when Mary Lyon Hall was opened for inspection to the citizens of Plymouth. The state legislature authorized $125,000 to erect this dormitory designed with architectural beauty to accommodate one hundred and thirty students in addition to dining room and kitchens.

The building was named in honor of the famous educator, Mary Lyon, who was the pioneer in higher education for women with her Seminary of Mount Holyoke in 1836. Miss Lyon taught for ten years at Adams Academy in Derry. There in 1824, for the first time in the history of education, six young women were given diplomas on the completion of a three-year course.

It was an excellent reason to honor her name where Dr. Silver, another educator from Derry, was the Principal.

Here, it is well to remind the citizens of Plymouth that Julia Elizabeth Ward was the Principal of Mount Holyoke Seminary between 1872 and 1883. She was born in 1832, the daughter of George Whitfield Ward, son of Enoch and grandson of Rev. Nathan Ward.

## THE CHASE LUMBER COMPANY FIRE

Miss Mudgett, in her story about Russell street, told about the family of Mr. Hanson S. Chase who built the house at No. 25 when he moved to Plymouth from Campton with his wife and four sons in 1873. Mr. Chase dealt in lumber and hemlock bark, the basis for tanning.

Two sons, Warren Green and Irving Hanson, followed the example of their father to establish an extensive lumber business with their yard in the hollow below Warren Street. They ran a steam mill near the railroad station. Logs were brought on freight cars and by ox-teams and the mill sawed from three to four million feet of boards annually.

When their yard was filled with logs and stacks of lumber, on December 28, 1917 fire swept through and reduced the whole to ashes. The business then removed to Laconia and became a partnership with the Veazie Company.

## THE SECOND HOSPITAL

Ten years before, in 1904, Dr. Ernest L. Bell opened his private hospital at 65 Highland Street, then a two story, wooden house. Four years later the Directors of the Emily Balch Cottage Hospital purchased this building. They opened a training school for nurses and four graduates received diplomas before disaster struck.

On one morning in March, 1916, danger spread through the hospital. Fire was discovered around the chimney that had gained such headway that hand extinguishers could not put out the blaze.

The fire company was hindered because the hose carts had to be dragged from Main Street up Highland Hill by manpower. The seventeen patients were safely removed and a part of the furniture was salvaged.

Immediately this serious situation aroused the citizens to demand modern pumps for fire apparatus to be housed on Highland Street where the fire station is now located. Two hand pumps were recommended, one to be quickly operated by the few firemen and the other by men who hurried to the fire. Another five years passed by before a hospital was again opened in Plymouth.

## WORLD WAR I

Although European nations had been at war since August 1, 1914, the United States, guided by the advice of President Woodrow Wilson, remained

neutral. After repeated atrocities, Congress declared war on Germany on April 6, 1917.

Young men immediately enlisted who were sent overseas in the Yankee Division to be trained in the field of Europe. The impression prevailed that the power of the United States joined with the European nations would soon end the conflict. Loyally the citizens accepted food rationing of sugar, butter, flour and meats. The American Red Cross was reactivated to encourage growing vegetables, knitting, and folding surgical dressings.

Suddenly an epidemic called La Grippe claimed hundreds of cases. Doctors and nurses organized home service groups that saved many lives.

Miss Caroline W. Mudgett compiled the list of individuals and their military records of one hundred twenty-nine men and women who were called into the armed services. Four men of this area gave their lives and many suffered wounds.

Bells rang for hours when the armistice was declared on November 11, 1918. "The War to End War" was finished.

## D. & M. BASEBALL PARK

During the war many products of the Draper-Maynard factory were requisitioned by the War Department. Since equipment for baseball was the basis of the prosperity of this factory, contacts with the national clubs resulted. In two successive years, 1915 and 1916, the winning World Champions Boston Red Sox were guests of this sporting goods factory in the fall.

With a bonus after the war, the D. & M. Baseball Park was laid out on land rented across the river in Holderness. A tight board fence, covered bleachers and other necessary equipment contributed to the enthusiasm that local teams enjoyed in competition, especially with their rival at Ashland.

Until floods damaged the field, baseball was the recreation throughout the summer and fall. The field was purchased by one of the enthusiastic players, Mr. Frank Smith of Huckins Hill, in honor of the memory of his brothers, Mr. Iza and Mr. Joshua Smith, a glove cutter in Plymouth and an eager baseball fan. Mr. Smith presented the grounds to the Plymouth Athletic Association. The local High School teams enjoy this playground, also the Little League teams of the Youth Council are acquiring practice in the sports with funds that are appropriated by the Town of Plymouth to provide coaches during the summers.

## THE THIRD HOSPITAL BUILDING

### A War Memorial

The American Legion was organized in Plymouth in 1919. A tangible memorial to all who served in World War I was desired. After due considera-

tion, a special town meeting on August 11, 1919 voted that the Town of Plymouth donate $3,500 for a third hospital building upon condition that the name of the Emily Balch Cottage Hospital be changed to the Emily Balch and Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hospital. The Association accepted this name.

On May 18, 1920, the Association voted to purchase the Schofield property on the line of Campton and Plymouth at Livermore Falls. This is historic ground. Fortunately the story about this site has been published by Mrs. Marie A. Hodge and is preserved by the Public Library. Also articles by Miss Caroline W. Mudgett about the Livermore Falls Neighborhood are contained in the scrap books that are in the files of the Historian of the D.A.R., Miss Miriam E. Keniston.

At the same period that the saw and grist mills were running beside the brooks at West Plymouth, a settlement began at the falls of the Pemigewasset River, now called Livermore Falls. Here was the grant of 1,500 acres that Governor Benning Wentworth reserved for his rights in the three townships of Campton, Holderness and Plymouth.

When this tract was reclaimed by King George III, many of the acres were acquired by Moses Little of Newburyport, Massachusetts. At the first town meeting in Campton, Mr. Little was chosen moderator. He settled on Pulsifer Hill.

The water power at the Falls soon turned the wheels for his saw and grist mills. Later his mill carded the wool of the sheep into rolls for spinning. When the yarn was woven into webs of cloth, his mill smoothed its surface by a steaming and scraping process called fulling.

In 1786, Mr. Little built a Colonial mansion after the Georgian design that ship-carpenters were erecting around the seacoast. Its enormous timbers were supplied by the primeval forests.

Not one but three sills support the walls, and double boarding covers the frame and the floors. A gambrel roof and hand-carved finish for the interior with crucifixion doors are of the colonial patterns.

Within ten years after his mansion was completed, Mr. Little died. His two sons inherited his estate and they sold, in part, to Judge Arthur Livermore in 1827. When Squire Samuel Livermore's will was read, to the disappointment of his younger son, Arthur, the elder son, St. Loe, received the estate in Holderness.

Arthur Livermore became a famous lawyer, a friend and colleague of Daniel Webster. As a presiding judge, he was unexcelled in the courts of New Hampshire. He was elected to both houses in the Congress of the United States. Only his irascible temper proved his undoing.

Unable financially to maintain the Livermore estate in Holderness which he purchased from his brother at too exorbitant a price, he purchased the mansion from the son of Mr. Moses Little and retired with his wife and eight children at the age of sixty years.

Tales about his unfortunate disposition are repeated in several publications. Remembered is the story about his anger because one of the small children fretted until the father opened a window and tossed the baby into a snow bank, saying: "Let him cool off."

Another, about the valuable bull that escaped from its pen at the time that Judge Livermore was walking about his fields. When he saw the infuriated animal charging toward him, with presence of mind the Judge dropped into a ditch just in time to allow the bull to jump above him. After the men captured the bull, the angry Judge secured his gun from his house and shot the animal which he could not afford to sacrifice to his temper.

At this time a wooden bridge crossed the river above the falls. The mills and ten houses comprised the neighborhood. A schoolhouse near the river was struck by lightning and the bolt killed a son of the Livermore family. The estate extended to Bridge street in Plymouth. Farms from this were sold to the Walker, Clifford, Page and Worthen families.

After Judge Livermore died, the son of Mr. Samuel Holmes of Holmes Academy fame, purchased the mansion. The gambrel roof was changed to a mansard. The two chimneys that contained flues for eight fireplaces were rebuilt and the ell and barn were finished. The twenty rooms were opened to summer boarders until age compelled Mr. Holmes to sell the property for a boarding house to Mr. Charles Schofield.

Then, in 1920, this famous mansion became the third hospital for Plymouth. The rooms were renovated by these families: Draper, Maynard, Brackett, Schofield, and Houston. Mr. Luther W. Packard of Ashland furnished funds to paint the exterior. The Women's Auxiliary installed a laundry while Dr. William R. Garland solicited $8,000 from many citizens that equipped the operating and X-ray rooms and fitted the ell for rooms for the nurses.

The list of the medical staff should be remembered: Dr. Garland, Dr. Ernest L. Bell, Dr. John Wheeler, Dr. Harold H. Palmer, Dr. Shirley M. Olmstead, Dr. Reginald DeWitt, Dr. Lyall A. Middleton, Dr. Frederick D. McIver of Plymouth; Dr. Leon M. Orton and Dr. Samuel Finer of Ashland; Dr. Harry Cheney of Campton and Dr. E. D. Burtt of Lincoln.

## MRS. RICHARD J. McLEAN

Among the many women who should be remembered is the wife of the editor of *The Plymouth Record,* Mrs. Richard J. McLean, for her constant

*Mrs. Loren Webster*
*Died in 1929*

effort and her generosity to the hospital. While a secretary before her marriage, she devised an improvement to the mechanism for typewriters which was adopted by manufacturers of all typewriters. Her royalties were distributed to many charities. She gave generous sums to promote the third hospital building, starting the fund for Dr. Garland with $1,000. Mrs. McLean died in 1925.

## MRS. LOREN WEBSTER

A woman who initiated movements to improve the health of children was Jennie J. Adams Webster, the wife of the rector at Holderness School. Mrs. Webster participated in the work of the Pemigewasset Woman's Club, accepted the office of President in 1900, and became the President of the State Federation of Women's Clubs in 1907.

Mrs. Webster began the state-wide sale of Red Cross Stamps for the elimination of tuberculosis that in later years were a changed design called the Christmas Seals. In her administration Mrs. Webster proposed medical inspection for children in the public schools that has developed into the school nursing department in New Hampshire. In 1911 she organized the Asquamchumauke Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution in Plymouth, serving as its Regent the following ten years. She became the thirteenth State Regent for the D.A.R. and held membership in many historical and scientific societies in New Hampshire. Mrs. Webster died in 1929.

*Main Street in 1920 without the Ten Footers, where the Rand Block is today. The photo shows Mount Prospect in the distance, the line of elms across the intervale, and the Bullfinch Bandstand on the Common in 1903.*

## THE RAND BLOCK

During the last years of this decade, the east side of Main street opposite the common, changed completely. The "ten-footers" were removed, three of them to Bridge street and two to Warren street. A hand-rail along the sidewalk prevented pedestrians from falling down the steep bank, then vacant.

The railroad sold this property to Mr. Albert M. Rand and his brother, Glea L. Rand. Mr. Albert Rand purchased the hardware store from Mr. Charles J. Gould, then erected the north section of the Rand Block. Mr. Glea Rand purchased the grocery business of Mr. William C. Bayley, then built the south section.

The two sons of Mr. Albert Rand, Watson and Robert, are operating an up-to-date business that includes electrical, gas and oil equipment for domestic purposes. Mr. Glea Rand sold his store when he was appointed postmaster by President Roosevelt.

Across the road to the parking lot the Davison Garage building, with space for stores along the front, was erected in 1922.

## MEMORIAL DAY

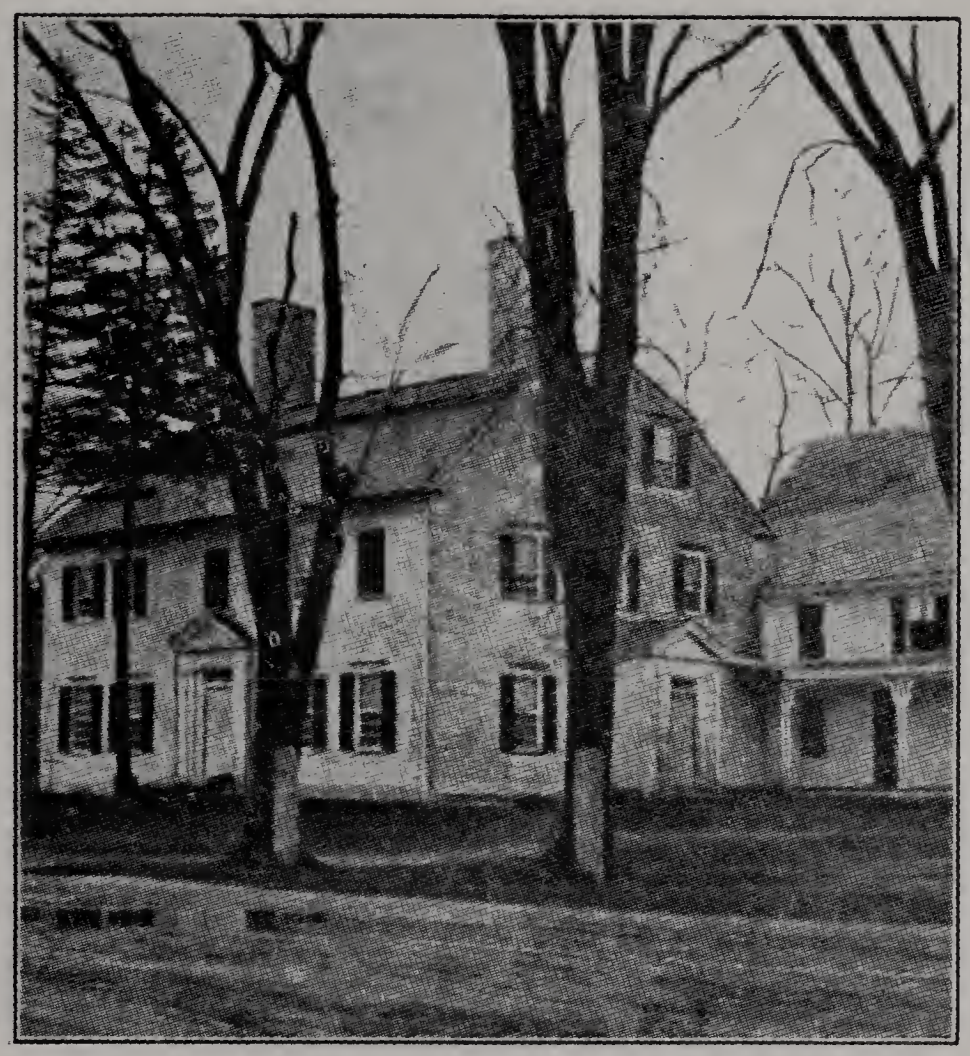
The American Legion assumed the arrangements for the ceremonies of Memorial Day, young men marking the veterans' graves with the flags. The

ranks of the Grand Army of the Republic were too few and too feeble to carry on the loyal service that they had performed since 1865.

Another change was the retirement of Mr. John Keniston as leader of the band. Mr. Harold C. Freeman became the Director in 1923. The building that Mr. Keniston originally built for a band room became a movie theatre. In 1963 the Masonic Fraternities are the owners.

## SUMMARY

The new High School, Mary Lyon Hall, the Chase Lumber Company fire, fire at the Cottage Hospital, the World War I, the new Memorial Hospital, two influential women—Mrs. McLean and Mrs. Webster, the Rand Block and Davison Garage, filled a busy decade with many changing and exciting events.



*The residence built by Moses Little in 1786. It was purchased in 1827 by Judge Arthur Livermore who gave his name to Livermore Falls. Next, James Holmes renovated the place for a boarding house. In 1920 it became the Emily Balch Soldiers and Sailors Hospital.*

# 1923-1933

## GROWTH AT THE NORMAL SCHOOL

Many improvements marked the progress of the Normal School in this decade. The enrollment was increasing rapidly. A new dormitory was planned, but to bridge the requirements for rooms, Russell House was purchased in 1925. Dr. Silver enjoyed rearranging this colonial residence for about thirty students. He retained the kitchen of 1797 intact for the living room. The mantel of the fireplaces, the inside shutters at the windows and the unsupported staircase were preserved unchanged.

The parsonage of the Congregational Church on the lawn in front of Mary Lyon Hall was bought and demolished, and the lawn was landscaped.

At this time, 1928, degrees were sanctioned in the Commercial Department and in the following year in the History Curriculum. Also, a residence for the President was unexpectedly acquired. The Shepard property on School street was for sale at one third of its value. It was a spacious home yet it was difficult to find a customer because its architecture was no longer in demand. The State found a bargain.

A wing for a new dormitory was erected in 1931. One of the oldest houses on Highland street, where Dr. William J. Tucker lived when a boy, was torn down to clear the site for the Samuel Reed Hall Dormitory, named in remembrance of the Principal of the Holmes Plymouth Academy who in 1837 introduced the idea of training teachers for grade positions.

After serious deliberation, the legislature authorized the granting of degrees in Education and the name Normal School became Plymouth Teachers College in 1939.

The east wing of the new dormitory was erected containing a library, and the connecting structure to the west wing was a small theatre and lounge on the second floor. Then the Peppard home was purchased for a Domestic Arts Department with faculty accommodations in the upper floors.

## MAIN STREET CHANGES

Changes along Main street came thick and fast. On February 23, 1925, the block that the Esso Station occupies at No. 131 was levelled by a fire that destroyed Potter's Garage, Carroll's Barber Shop, Houston's Harness Shop, and Kebrick's Restaurant.

In April, the highest spring flood in twenty-seven years washed away several bridges and left a few families homeless. Even the railroad tracks were undermined.

Above a store in the Kidder Block the name of O'Brien's appeared in 1926. Mr. William O'Brien came from Boston to fill the shelves with the finest stock of dry goods north of his native city.

## WAR MEMORIAL

At the town meeting in 1926, $5,000 was appropriated to erect a memorial to those citizens who had participated in all previous wars. A granite monument was dedicated on the courthouse lawn on May 30, the unveiling ceremony being performed by two Gold Star Mothers, Mrs. Mandana Smith and Mrs. Cedena Fifield. Four members of the G.A.R. raised the Stars and Stripes on a new flag pole. Thus with this monument and the flag waving daily, the citizens pay their tribute on the courthouse green.

## THE 1927 FLOOD

A surprising atmospheric condition developed in October of 1927. Rain fell until the lakes and streams were bank full. Then on November third and fourth, the heavens opened with sheets of water that fell like hammer blows upon the housetops.

The mountain streams sent waves a foot high down the valleys. The Pemigewasset Valley filled first and covered the meadows in a brief hour. Then the Baker River rushed against this flood and backed over the highways of Route 25 and the Rumney Road, even surrounding dwellings. Cattle were hastily driven to higher ground but chickens and hogs did not escape at a few farms.

The pupils arrived in the morning at the High School only to be immediately returned to their homes. Bridges, hen coops and pigsties were floating down the rivers. Freight cars loaded with coal were run into the covered railroad bridge on the P.V. Line, and ropes were fastening it to the banks, because the bridge just above on the Baker River was being washed off its abutments with several feet of water flowing above the floors of both bridges.

Within a half hour, all exits from the village were under several feet of water. River street homes were flooded to the second floors with their families being rescued by boats. Such emergency dangers were hitherto unknown although frequently spring brought high water over the meadows.

The electric power failed, the sewers backed up along Main street, and the food problem became serious. The Hatch Dairy was able to deliver milk that was distributed to families with small children. The shelves of the

grocery stores were bare. Suddenly the village realized how meager was the amount of food that seemingly was in abundance in the grocery stores.

Most serious was the food situation at the Normal School with over three hundred students who ate what the store-room contained until only hams remained. Relief came when a courageous truckman negotiated the old Hill roads to Thurlow street bringing a truckload of bread and meat from Laconia.

Thus for three days the village was isolated from the outside world. Even the telephone wires were in tangled confusion. Yet New Hampshire did not suffer as did Vermont. There the roads were not hard-surfaced and the rivers in the valleys rendered traveling impossible with highways washed away. So suddenly did the water rise that many cattle were drowned before they could be driven to safety.

As the waters subsided, the danger from pollution increased. The Red Cross furnished disinfectants to all families whose homes were flooded. The citizens of Plymouth contributed hundreds of dollars that Mr. Moses Batchelder wisely distributed to the stricken families to rehabilitate their homes before the winter snows increased the difficult conditions.

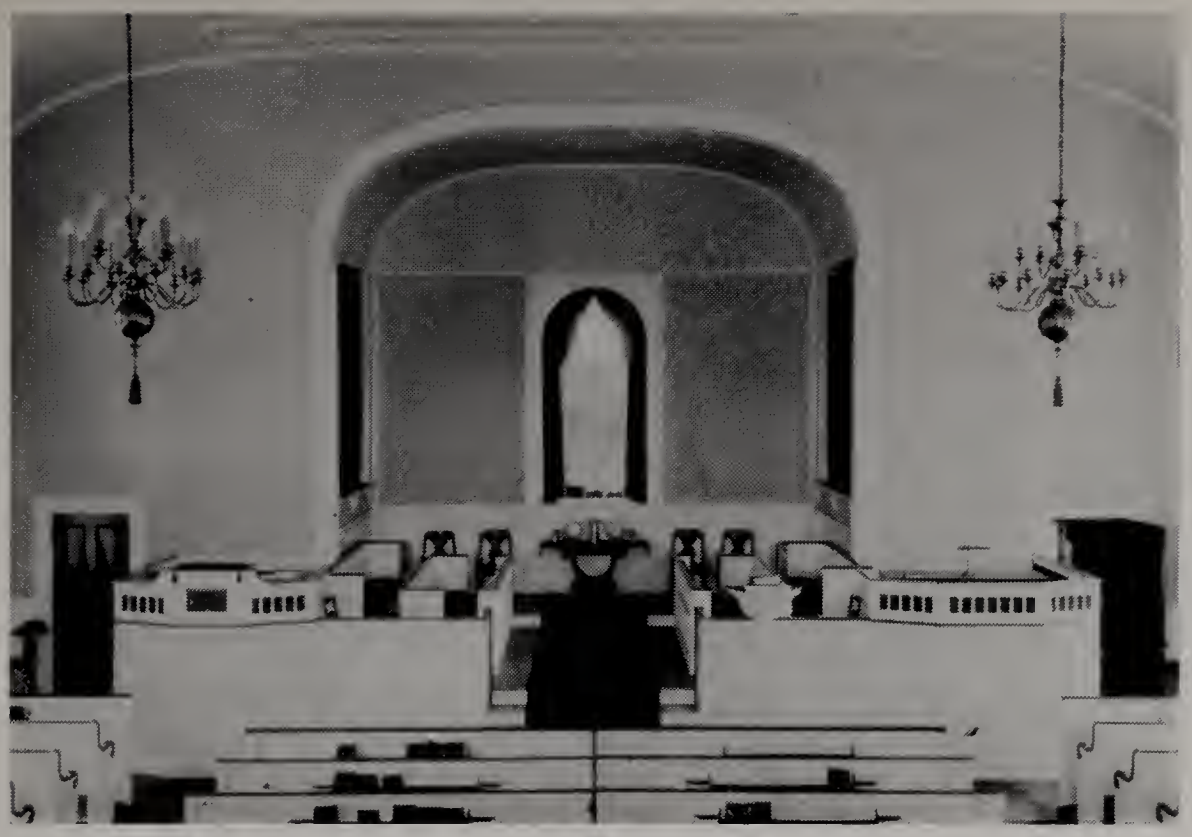
On a granite post at the Clark Farm, the owner had left marks to indicate the height of previous floods. When the mark of the great flood of 1869 was surpassed by two feet, there was tangible proof that the 1927 flood was the highest in the history of the Pemigewasset Valley.

## CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH CHANCEL

A surprise gift of $1,200 toward a pipe organ for the Congregational Church spurred enthusiasm to solicit the necessary $10,000. After a successful campaign, the organ was ordered from the Skinner Company.

Before this instrument was installed, Mr. George G. Clark employed an architect and the Irving, Casson firm of interior decorators to renovate the chancel. A committee visited churches to ascertain the trend in church architecture. The base of the Ward Hill pulpit became the lectern and the pulpit was a pattern of the sacred desk at Sandown to produce a colonial design in keeping with the century old interior. The walls were painted and the seats and cushions were renovated. New carpets and electroliers completed the work.

Two men should be remembered for their generosity to the Congregational Church: Amos M. Kidder who gave $15,000 to provide the chapel, and George G. Clark who gave an equal amount in 1928 for many additions to the sanctuary.



*Chancel in the Congregational Church—1928*

## FIRE AT THE TUFTS BLOCK

Again the menace of fire brought destruction on a December evening in 1930. The night was cold when the Tufts building at the corner of Highland and Main streets and the three story brick Fox Block on Main street were destroyed. The cliff behind these building acted like the wall of a fireplace so that the heat filled the Square with such intensity that spectators were obliged to stand on Court street.

Stores on the lower floors and the glove business of Mr. Gill Fletcher were destroyed and but few furnishings from the upper stories could be saved.

Mr. and Mrs. Pease immediately cleared the debris and erected a two story brick block with steel framework. Tenants were permitted to plan for their type of business in their stores and the lodges of the I.O.O.F. arranged their suite on the second floor.

## FIRE AT THE HOWE HOUSE

The Howe House was the old landmark between the Kidder and the Rollins Blocks. Erected in 1800 by Steven Webster, it was then the home of his grandson, but acquired the name of Howe when Mr. Lucius S. Howe came to the place from Campton about 1850.

In February of 1932 the basement caught fire and smoke filled the apartments preventing removal of furnishings before they were ruined by water.

The house had been purchased by Mr. Fred Brown, druggist and realtor, who inserted glass fronts and rented the two rooms for shops.

The damage was too great to repair. The site was cleared for a modern structure, now the J. J. Newberry store, largest floor space north of Concord.

## CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

A teacher of civics named Badger at the High School suggested that the youth needed facilities for recreation in the winter months. He promoted a Chamber of Commerce. The first project of this group was a skating rink on a field at Bayley Avenue. The High School held a Carnival with prizes for snow sculpture and a ball in the evening.

The Chamber has promoted the information booth in the summer, secured the state grounds on Main and Court streets for a parking lot for all day business people, and influenced many civic improvements too numerous to list here.

## ROTARY CLUB

Mr. John Gadd, Superintendent of the division of the New England Telephone Company, ascertained the policies of Rotary International. Then he gradually persuaded eligible men that a Rotary Club was an asset in a community. Since 1931 this club has functioned, working especially for young people by giving scholarships to worthy students and sponsoring the Boy Scouts. Mr. Gadd's efforts have resulted in many philanthropic and cultural affairs such as the annual concert in memory of a deceased musician, Mr. Hyman Kaplan.

## PLYMOUTH THEATRE

In the last year of this decade, 1932, a Plymouth Theatre was erected on South Main street by a company from Lancaster with Mr. Sherburn Graves as the manager. The appointments were modern with a wide screen, air conditioning and comfortable seating.

The program of films was up-to-date by the finest actors, filling the theatre with patrons from miles around. Special Saturday afternoon films for children were of real educational value. Mr. Graves cooperated with organizations by securing films to produce funds by sale of tickets for charitable or community benefit.

Until television in homes became popular, the Plymouth Theatre was an adjunct to local recreation for old and young. Because of decreased patronage, the number of programs were curtailed, yet their quality remained excellent.

## THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

After the family of Squire Samuel Livermore no longer resided in Holderness, the Diocese of the Episcopal Church opened the Holderness School for Boys on this estate. The school has a modern plant for a student body of about one hundred and fifty boys. It maintains a high standard of secondary education.

For many years, after the school was founded in 1879, those families who were of the Episcopal faith in Plymouth attended the Holy Cross Chapel at the school. As the enrollment enlarged, this chapel was so crowded that the people of Plymouth transferred to the Ashland Episcopal Church.

Gradually the folk in Plymouth decided that an Episcopal Church should be maintained in their own town, and in 1933 the Universalist church building became the Church of the Holy Spirit with a resident rector.

## SUMMARY

This decade brought many improvements to Plymouth Teachers College, changes on Main street by three fires: in the Kebrick Block, the Tufts Block and the Howe House, the War Memorial at the Courthouse, the 1927 Flood, renovations in the Congregational Church, organization of the Chamber of Commerce and the Rotary Club, the Plymouth Theatre, the Church of the Holy Spirit, and the erection of the building on the site of the Kidder Block with the re-opening of O'Brien's.

*The covered bridge of 1874 and the P.V. Railroad bridge over the Baker River on Route 3, photographed during the flood of 1927.*

*The Boy Scout Fountain with Najla Samaha and the Frachers' dog, in 1933.*

# 1933-1943

## THE VILLAGE GREEN

The President of the Pemigewasset Woman's Club, Mrs. C. Herbert Adams, with a desire to accomplish an outstanding community project during her term of office, decided that the Common, or Village Green, needed renovation. Sewers had been laid under the southern section that left broad scars of gravel across the lawn.

With the realization that this spot is the property of the town, Mrs. Adams explained her objective before the annual town meeting. The voters sanctioned the motion that the Pemigewasset Woman's Club be authorized to landscape the Village Green.

A committee of club members was appointed: Mrs. Charlotte White Webster, Chairman, Mrs. Helen Flagg, Mrs. Florence Nichols, Mrs. Effie Chase and Mrs. Eva Speare. With the assistance of Mrs. Adams, this committee collected approximately $650.00 to finance the beginning of this work.

The surface was plowed, fertilized with twenty loads of dressing, and covered with two hundred loads of loam, the donation of Mr. Moses Batchelder. Grass seed, given by Rand's Hardware Store, was sowed that a timely rain germinated rapidly.

For the bandstand, a renewed foundation, paint and shingles were supplied. The central walk was completed by the town, the slate stones being brought from a quarry in Wentworth by Mr. Carl Mitchell with his trucks.

The granite posts of the fence were set firmly, the square timbers again fastened into the iron bolts and paint, given by the Chase Grain Company, was applied by a group of young men.

Over a period of two summers, Chief Felix McCarthy prevented destruction of the lawn until the turf became firm. The citizens cooperated before the seats were again scattered beneath the elms. The club expended $1,400 in addition to the donations from generous citizens.

## THE BOY SCOUT FOUNTAIN

Beautifying the Village Green encouraged Mr. George G. Clark to install a drinking fountain with a legacy of $1,000 and the interest, that was bequeathed in the will of his cousin, Daniel W. Burrows.

To provide for children and adults, Mr. Clark planned for two bubblers surrounded by a wide concrete platform. As he was a friend of birds and animals, thirsty dogs had attracted the notice of Mr. Clark on many occasions. How to supply a fountain for the dogs was the problem.

A boy scout, Morton Wheeler, the son of the deceased family doctor of the Clark Family, suggested a solution. The actual idea was conceived by Mrs. Webster, chairman of the beautification committee. Why not exemplify one of the ideals of scouting, kindness to animals, with a statue of a scout dropping water from his cupped hands into a basin on the ground?

A friend of Mr. Clark, Mr. George H. Borst, a summer resident at Newfound Lake and a noted sculptor in Philadelphia, was enlisted in this project. Morton Wheeler and Harold Webster, Jr., posed in their scout uniforms during the summer for Mr. Borst. A lad in Philadelphia earned a sufficient amount to support his parents during the next winter by posing for the figure of the scout.

The boulder for the base was discovered in Franconia Notch; the pothole basin came from under the bridge at Wentworth Village. Another scout, Cedrick Simpson, assisted in measuring for the platform, but refused pay because he was a scout. To this lad was given the honor of unveiling the statue on June 18, 1933, before an audience of four hundred people.

Nobody will learn how many thousands of dollars Mr. Clark paid for this statue. It stands as a memorial to a loyal citizen of Plymouth. Mr. Clark was amply paid when the black dog belonging to Mr. Fracher came every morning for his drink at the dogs' fountain in the granite pot-hole.

## PONT FAYETTE REPLACED

Pont Fayette was still a span that was equal to the weight of traffic in 1934 but its doom was sealed when the Highway Commissioner for the State, Mr. Frederic E. Everett was driving through the bridge in company with Mr. William J. Randolph. Half way through a truck obliged them to back out to permit the truck to pass. Too dangerous was the verdict of Mr. Everett.

Federal and State aid was secured. Special town meetings were called in Holderness and Plymouth to approve their share of the expense and about the first of May, 1935 a new steel bridge was opened to traffic. The cost was $48,943, Plymouth to pay $12,000 and Holderness $8,000. The weight capacity is thirty tons.

Only the Smith Covered Bridge remains over the Baker River, since a new steel bridge was erected on the Daniel Webster Highway after the flood of 1927 to replace the covered bridge of 1874, and the P.V. Railroad also built a new span of steel.

## SMITH BRIDGE

About 1825, a covered bridge across the Baker River was erected near the home of Mr. Jacob Smith who came to Plymouth in 1780. The Stearns History of Plymouth states that he gave his name to the bridge. He died in 1830.

In his book, "Covered Bridges of New Hampshire," by Mr. W. Edward White, the statement is printed that, "In the early 1800's Captain Richardson built the bridge." No trace of this builder has been discovered.

The late Mr. George G. Clark wrote an article for the Plymouth Town Report in 1949. This states that, "On June 14, 1850 James McQuesten engaged Herman Marcy of Littleton who agrees to frame, raise and finish a covered bridge across Baker River for the Town of Plymouth, site known as Smith bridge, same plan and style as Pont Fayette." The original cost was $2,720.92. "The contractor to have all advantage he can derive from old bridge in raising the new bridge."

In 1949, one of the arches was so badly settled that the bridge was getting into a serious condition. State Engineer Hammond and two bridge men helped Mr. Leon Edgell with four workmen of Plymouth to repair the structure. The laminated arches were lifted with a crane and firmly re-set into the abutments at an expense of $4,400.

This is the one remaining covered bridge in Plymouth. The covered bridge of 1874 over the Baker River on the Daniel Webster Highway was so damaged in the flood of 1927 that a steel bridge soon replaced it. This was a lattice bridge of the Towne Truss design.

## FLOOD OF 1936

That imaginary creature, the Weather Man, spread havoc through New England. The trouble began in Plymouth about March 10, 1936 with the usual spring flood that covered the intervale and filled the cellars on River Street. Cakes of ice swept down the Pemigewasset River to lodge about a mile south of the Plymouth railroad station. At the same hour the Alouette, the afternoon express train from Montreal, left the station to meet the water and cakes of ice where the track skirted the river bank. The train stalled and the water rose to the floor of the cars. The fire company in row boats rescued the passengers as darkness approached.

The following week of March 18, 1936, rain fell heavily through four days causing the highest water known on the intervales. Homes were filled to the second floors, and the water stood three feet deep in the railroad station.

The Baker River rushed several feet above the floors of the two bridges

at the north end of the village, but did not wash these new structures from their abutment. The east end of Pont Fayette was awash and huge cakes of ice battered the floor, but the bridge held. The track of the P.V. Line was hanging without support the length of one hundred feet or more.

The firemen and Mr. Hal Sargent plied the meadows in boats to rescue the residents of River street. Chief McCarthy opened the courthouse to sixty-two refugees and the hotels and inns were crowded. At Beebe River the schoolhouse and homes on the higher ground received the homeless residents. The official report stated that the water reached a height of twenty-four feet above normal.

One bit of nature was observed. A bear was seen floating down the Daniel Webster highway. He climbed up the bank near the underpass and wandered off apparently suffering no danger from the icy bath.

Although the flood was the highest known, yet the damage in Plymouth was less than in 1927 to highways and bridges. The Red Cross assisted the unfortunate neighborhoods with money, disinfectants and clothing.

## THE HURRICANE OF 1938

A four-day rainfall beginning on September 18, 1938 raised the rivers over all the highway entrances to the town. Fortunately, Headmaster Charles E. Moors dismissed the pupils in time to return to their homes. A warning was heard over the radio that a hurricane that was coming northward might veer toward New England with winds of seventy miles per hour. The atmosphere shed a peculiar glare about three o'clock in the afternoon.

Then the wind began to blow and people decided to fasten awnings and remove their summer furniture to safety. By six o'clock, limbs began to break off the shade trees while the wind increased to a roar. All night the hurricane raged, damaging houses, barns and forests with terrific velocity.

When morning dawned, the havoc was too astonishing. The earth was so soaked that century old elms and maples fell, pulling their roots from the ground. Every street was blocked by its shade trees. The elms on the east side of the Village Green lay prostrate. The parking lot was covered. Highland street lost most of its trees. At Weeks street, the roofs of houses were crushed and the groves of pines along Merrill street were down.

The forests were a tangle of broken, uprooted and topless logs. Salvage was almost hopeless, because the wood was filled with coarse sand that dulls the saws in the mills.

While this seemed unbelievable, a salt spray covered everything, mingled with finely ground leaves that dried to a crust that demanded scrubbing to remove from walls and windows of the houses.

Electric wires were tangled among the fallen poles; telephones were silenced for days. The selectmen furnished equipment of the highway department to remove the stumps of trees for all householders and aided in the clean-up speedily.

About 1900, a tree warden was appointed who counted seven hundred trees along the streets and homes in the town. Many of those elms and maples fell on the night of September 18, 1938.

## UNITED STATES POSTOFFICE
### End of "The Old Brick"

For a quarter of a century, Mr. Moses Batchelder conducted a men's clothing store in the "Old Brick" and rented space later to Mrs. E. G. Severance for her Woman's Shop and to Nichols' Flower and Gift Shop.

The Federal Government purchased this landmark for the site of a postoffice building in 1936. The building was demolished and the new postoffice was dedicated with elaborate ceremonies on the afternoon of October 4, 1937. The flag was raised by the American Legion, assisted by Boy and Girl Scouts and music by the Community Band. The keys were presented to postmaster Glea L. Rand and representatives of the New England Division and the Treasury Department participated in the program with Congressman Charles W. Tobey as the main speaker.

## THE GRADE SCHOOL

The population of the town was increasing. The four rural schools were becoming crowded, and a new grade school building was necessary. Wells, Hudson and Grainger, architects of Hanover, were employed to draw plans to accommodate all of the grades. The building, containing twelve school rooms and offices, with a connecting auditorium that will seat a thousand people and serve as a gymnasium, was dedicated on October 7, 1939. This stands opposite the High School, facing High and Summer streets. Hard surfaced playgrounds between the Memorial and High School buildings and beside this new school building have improved the surroundings.

In 1941, the four rural schools were closed and the pupils are transported to the village grade schools.

The Model School was named in honor of the many pupils who during the past seventy years had served in the Armed Forces of the nation; "The Memorial School." The new grade school building received the name of the Director of the Training Department of Plymouth Teachers College: "Guy E. Speare School." Mr. Speare was a member of the faculty from 1921 until his death in 1945.

## WORLD WAR II

Although the nation realized that the forces of Hitler in Germany threatened the United States, yet the sudden surprise attack upon Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 by the Japanese Air Force shocked and aroused this country to a fighting spirit.

To comprehend the part that the citizens of Plymouth incurred one should study the records of the 392 young men and women who participated in the Army, Navy, Marines and Air Force.

Mr. Gordon M. Clay served as Chairman of the Local Draft Board. Men of military age were listed and their status determined. After reading clippings from newspapers that describe the personal experiences of scores of the services that the men and women performed who had been pupils in the schools within a few months, one is filled with astonishment at the courage that lies innate in our midst.

Twelve gave their lives, scores were wounded, others endured hunger and cold or heat in all parts of the globe. Certainly careful watch should be kept over these scrapbooks lest these records disappear.

The War ended on September 28, 1945. Then the Cold War began with the knowledge that two atom bombs had devastated two cities in Japan.

## O. A. MILLER TREE FACTORY

A competing firm in the manufacturing of sporting goods, The P. Goldsmith Sons Company of Cincinnati, purchased the Draper-Maynard Company's business in September of 1937. An auction in October disposed of the stock and Mr. Harry A. Ronan became owner of the building.

After five years, in April, 1942, the factory was bought by the O. A. Miller Shoe Tree Company that operated under this name until September, 1962 when the name of the business was changed to O. A. Miller, Inc., of Rochester, New York.

## ADAMS MARKET

The chain grocery companies were competing for the trade of housewives. During the war years, the Adams Market, an independent local business was opened on Main street by Mr. W. Carlton Adams with a stock of brands of proven quality and local products. After twenty-five years of operation with constantly increasing trade, this store has demonstrated that local enterprise wins patronage.

## GASOLINE STATIONS

Almost imperceptibly, big business gradually invaded Main street with gasoline stations occupying the lots that fires cleared of old wooden buildings. The horse and buggy days disappeared before this decade. The gaso-

line engine transformed trade and transportation, crowded the narrow streets with parking, and endangered the lives of pedestrians.

Between Warren street and Tobey road, a dozen gasoline stations were sandwiched among the business blocks within a decade. A station was very different from the former type of trade. A deep excavation admitted enormous fuel tanks. Above these was a wide, hard-surfaced area with brightly painted pumps displayed. In the rear was a garage and store to supply tires and accessories for automobiles. The village street lost its shade trees and its formerly quieter atmosphere to speed, honking signals by cars, and crowded traffic. The former era and its pace had disappeared. Only the Village Green saved the individuality of Plymouth.

## SUMMARY

Changes created a new face for Plymouth with the Village Green and Boy Scout fountain and the old covered bridge supplanted, and repairs to the Smith Bridge. Flood and hurricane depleted the shade trees, a new postoffice and school buildings appeared. World War II disturbed everybody. New trading at Adams Market, and Gasoline Stations opened to transform the Main street.

*The lattice bridge of 1874 over the Baker River in the Village.*

*Methodist Church, 1872, Kidder Block, 1888, and Howe House, 1800 – 1932*

# 1943-1953

This decade will always be remembered. The second World War was a period of scientific surprises with radio communications, super airplanes and radar. Then the marvels of the Atomic Age astonished a world that can never enjoy the former peaceful existence again. Values changed, and inflation reduced the buying power of the United States dollar. Another era began.

## THE PLYMOUTH RECORD

A newspaper is a necessity in every community. After Mr. Thomas J. Walker began to publish the Plymouth Record in 1887 at Railroad Square, the important events of each week were preserved for posterity. (See Decade 1883-1893)

Eight years later, Mr. Edward A. Chase and Mr. Charles Wright edited the Record in a partnership until Mr. Wright went to Washington to become secretary to Senator George H. Moses.

Mr. Chase was the son of Hanson Chase of Russell street where Mrs. Chase is living in 1963. After Mr. Chase decided to join the firm of the Chase Grain Mill, Mr. Richard McLean was the publisher, a man who is remembered for his ability and loyalty to his town.

A partner in the office was Miss M. Suzanne Loizeaux, the daughter of a prominent dentist, a young woman who broadened the scope of the paper by her participation in both the community and a wider radius of public relations. At the death of Mr. McLean, Miss Loizeaux was sole editor until 1943.

Mr. Harold E. Wilkins, a veteran of World War I, purchased the paper and admitted members of his family into the business. His sister, Mrs. Doris Wherland, is now editor and another sister, Mrs. Herbert Houghton, is office manager. This is a newspaper that promotes the best interests of the town in news, advertising and assistance in every improvement in the religious and civic affairs of the area. Copies of its files since 1900 may be read at the State Library in Concord.

## KIDDER BLOCK FIRE

Five days after this decade began, on January 5, 1943, at 4 A.M. the morning air was filled with the sound of the fire siren and Main street was red with light. Crowds rushed hurriedly to discover that the Kidder block

*At left, John Gill Fletcher, 1852 – 1943, glove manufacturer and policeman over 25 years, and Felix McCarthy, 1866 – 1952, policeman for 40 years. Mr. Fletcher furnished mittens and leather for harnesses for Richard Byrd's Antarctic Expedition.*

was a furnace and the Methodist Church was burning briskly, the steeple a torch of flame, beautiful but disastrous.

The origin was believed to have been an explosion in the basement of the block which spread the flames with such rapidity that the tenants in the third floor apartments were obliged to flee immediately for their lives. Destroyed were the Kidder Music Hall, O'Brien's department store, Peaslee's Drugs, Stevens' hardware, Ayer's Insurance, Robert Wakefield's law office, and the Masonic Hall. Within the Methodist Church were all of their furnishings, their fine pipe organ, the Gill bell, and the records of the Pemigewasset Woman's Club.

But for a sprinkler system recently installed by the Plymouth Record, its plant and other buildings on North Main street would have been consumed in the morning wind. Thus the name of the benefactor of Plymouth, Mr. Amos M. Kidder, disappeared, yet his memory should be cherished by the Congregational Church for his financial gifts of thousands that erected the chapel and by the banks that he was instrumental in establishing.

Mr. O'Brien went, on the previous day, to enter service in the war where

he loyally stayed until the Armistice. The owner of the Kidder Block rebuilt a modern structure. Mr. O'Brien reopened his store in 1946, Guyer's Drugs replaced Peaslee's with Fracher's hardware located in the north end. Fracher's Diner, a snack-bar for students, and a filling station occupied the site of the Methodist Church. The vacant lot at the corner of Main and Court streets, belonging to the College, solved the most necessary requirement of this decade: a place to park automobiles.

Old Main street no longer existed. Only the Blake and Rollins Blocks were two stories in height. Both were ravaged by fires a few years later and renovated.

## THE HONOR ROLL

On the evening of September 28, 1945, by the light of torches, an evening ceremony of memorial import dedicated a large plaque on the Courthouse Green. The names of three hundred ninety-two men and women who entered the war service of World War II were inscribed. Nine gold stars marked those who gave their lives and four others were then missing. General Frank D. Merrill of Lincoln, hero of the Burma Campaign in Asia, was the speaker. At the close, Mr. Harold C. Freeman sounded Taps.

## A NEW METHODIST CHURCH

The members of the Methodist Church, after long consideration, decided to purchase a lot on Highland street that was of sufficient dimensions to allow expansion in the future. The edifice contains a sanctuary that seats about four hundred people, its walls embellished by memorial stained glass windows and a rose window in the gable of the chancel, choir stalls, Hammond organ with chimes, and several small rooms on the street level. Beneath is a chapel and dining room combination, large modern kitchen, and the heating plant.

These courageous people emphasized the old saying, "Where there is a will, there is a way." A group began to serve Smorgasbord Saturday evening suppers with their slogan, "All you can eat for a dollar." Their reputation for quantity and quality spread throughout the cottages of summer residents until patrons were turned away occasionally.

During the interim, the Sunday School met in the store of Mr. Louis Richelson in space that he kindly loaned, and the services were held in the Episcopal Church on Sabbath afternoons.

On October 9, 1947, dedication of the new sanctuary was celebrated, and during the following week a program of worship services was enjoyed in which the churches and ministers of the other denominations in the community participated. Nearly $100,000 has been contributed for this religious plant and the mortgage was burned within the following decade.

The Methodist denomination has been influential in the religious life of

*The Methodist Church—1947.*

Plymouth since 1800 at the time when the Circuit Riders visited in West Plymouth. The first of their church services was held in the barn belonging to Eben Blodgett in 1807. Their brick chapel on the Yeaton Road and two churches on Main street since 1833 have included many of the prominent families of the town. Women are faithful workers and four should be remembered with reverence: Miss Caroline W. Mudgett, Mrs. Alvin Burleigh, Mrs. George Adams and Mrs. Charles J. Ayer.

## A WOMAN LEGISLATOR

Since the Women's Suffrage Amendment to the Federal Constitution was adopted in 1919, gradually women voters have gained recognition. The influence of women in party politics has resulted in their election to national and state positions. In 1949, Plymouth elected its first woman legislator, Miss M. Suzanne Loizeaux, who immediately excelled because of her sound judgment. The Speaker of the House appointed her a member of the Appropriations Committee in company with our veteran legislator, Kenneth G. Bell.

As soon as this area was eligible, by a political agreement, to choose a senator, Miss Loizeaux served a term in the State Senate, then returned to the House until 1963 when she refused reelection.

## THE SCEVA SPEARE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Another clerk in the Russell store came to Plymouth from Chelsea, Vermont in 1882, Mr. Sceva Speare. In the next twelve years, Mr. Speare was

active in the business and in the Congregational church as a deacon. Then he accepted a position with Brown and Durrell as a traveling salesman. Later he established a dry goods store in Nashua, New Hampshire and another in Haverhill, Massachusetts. He was a director in the Indian Head Bank of Nashua and in many philanthropic offices. He did not forget Plymouth, as the story about the hospital will tell.

While calling on a long-time friend, Mr. Speare saw the necessity for a modern hospital building. Immediately, he offered $50,000 toward a new hospital if this amount were matched. World War II thwarted the efforts of Mr. Fred W. Brown and Mr. Harl Pease in their canvass for the extra thousands.

After the war, Dr. Ernest L. Silver became President of the Board of Directors of the hospital. He immediately revived the project. Assisted by Rev. Edric A. Weld, Rector of the Holderness Boys' School, as Chairman, thousands in generous gifts accumulated. Because of failing health, Dr. Silver resigned and Rev. Adrien Verrette succeeded him.

At this period, the Federal Government appropriated funds to assist in spreading modern hospital facilities. Plymouth was in a position to qualify for federal aid, but a time limit created a problem. The Women's Auxiliary organized a team of eighty women who solicited from everybody a sufficient amount immediately to meet the requirements of the federal agency in New Hampshire. Mrs. Loys A. Wiles was the chairman, and Mrs. Guy E. Speare, treasurer, with Mrs. Herbert Lamson, Mrs. John S. Smith, and Mrs. James S. Conway as co-workers on the committee.

Architects of experience in hospital construction were engaged. Mr. Watson A. Rand, the chairman of the building committee, constantly supervised every detail of the construction. To his thorough and expert observation, this modern plant is credited.

Beds for fifty patients, a children's ward and maternity department fill the second floor. Operating rooms, drug closets, X-ray rooms, laundry, kitchen, storerooms, heating plant, offices for the staff, administrator, and business division and a lobby cover the first floor. The plans allow for a third floor, should this become advisable. Since this beginning, an addition on the north enlarged the bed space and the director's rooms.

Ex-Governor Adams was the speaker at the dinner after the afternoon ceremony to lay the corner stone on February 9, 1950. By April, 1951 open house days preceded the dedication on May 2, 1951. A portrait of Mr. Speare was presented for the lobby in the name of the Women's Auxiliary.

Approximately $800,000 is invested in this plant. Several physicians, mentioned on the staff previously, have moved and Dr. Leon M. Orton died.

*The Sceva Speare Memorial Hospital—1951.*

New members are Dr. William M. Thompson, Dr. Henry D. Crane, and Dr. Eugenia Hurme-Kirk. Affiliation with the Mary Hitchcock Clinic of Hanover permits a hospital service of unusual efficiency for this area of approximately 20,000 population.

Looking backward to realize that appendicitis was a discovery at the period in 1890 when the Emily Balch Cottage Hospital opened, the advance in medical and surgical practice is phenomenal. In the future, the birthplace of distinguished persons cannot be enshrined because probably the hospital where they were born will be forgotten or demolished. To those women of three-quarters of a century ago who decided that Plymouth should establish a hospital, let us pay thankful tribute.

## SUMMARY

The beginning of the atomic age distinguished this decade. The Plymouth Record, the Kidder Block and Methodist Church fire, the Honor Roll for World War II, Miss Loizeaux—First Woman Legislator, and building the Sceva Speare Memorial Hospital—all important events.

*The Flood of 1936 on the same site as on page 151 with the two covered bridges replaced by steel spans.*

# 1953 - 1963

The final decade was one of progressive activity: industrial, commercial and educational advancement. On the other hand the old, yet familiar, disappeared.

The covered bridge at the "wading place" at the Baker River in West Plymouth fell into the stream with a roar that disturbed the slumbers of the neighborhood. The structure was old and condemned. Probably it was erected about 1820, since its trusses were of the same design as the Smith and Blair bridges.

## END OF PASSENGER SERVICE

A greater loss was passenger service on the railroad through competition with automobiles. One hundred and ten years ago the first train was welcomed with shouts of joy. Now a passenger train rolled from the station without a paying ticket. On a September evening, the last train left for Concord without drawing a crowd to wave farewell in 1959. The rails between Plymouth and Woodsville were removed in 1960.

## GATE POST AT WEST PLYMOUTH

Between the village and West Plymouth, Route 25 was widened and a traffic circle connected with the highway to Bristol, the old Mayhew Turnpike. Since 1806 the gate post for the toll gate has remained at the "Head," so called, these many years.

At the request of Miss Loizeaux, a member of Asquamchumauke Chapter, D.A.R., the Superintendent of the highway construction kept this old landmark in his barn in Holderness. After the post was re-set on the same old site, the D.A.R. placed a bronze plate, inscribed with its history, upon the post.

A meeting of the Chapter dedicated the plaque with a brief program that was highlighted by the story about the Merrill Tavern that only recently was removed because of age from the roadside near by. Mrs. Carl A. Hall of Concord and Rumney told about the life of the Merrill Family at the tavern and about the original tavern sign that hangs in her summer home in Rumney.

The selectmen, Mr. Harl Pease and Mr. William J. Driscoll, graciously represented the Town of Plymouth at this ceremony. Both these officials are actively retaining these intrinsically valuable relics of the past in the town.

*Dedication of the bronze tablet at the Gate Post of the Mayhew Turnpike, 1955, by the Asquamchumauke Chapter, D.A.R. Selectmen William Driscoll and Harl Pease are shown at the right.*

## NATIONAL GUARD AND ARMORY

Since World War II did not result in actual victory, but rather created fears for future troubles, national defense became important. In 1950, after an address before the Chamber of Commerce by General Charles Bowen, then Adjutant General of the State of New Hampshire, a National Guard Unit was organized by men from this area of towns.

The following year, federal recognition for this Battery C, 210th AAA Unit was received. Drills were conducted at the Shank Mill. In 1957 a huge armory was constructed beside the Daniel Webster Highway. In addition to a drill floor, a large gun, trucks, radar equipment and all necessary facilities for the functions of the Unit are provided.

On the 22nd of February, 1957, several hundred citizens enjoyed the Open House program when Brigadier General Francis B. McSwiney, Adjutant General of the New Hampshire National Guard, presented the keys to the Commanding Officer, Captain George H. Bartlett.

A surprise feature of the program was the presentation of the spurs, saber, and four Guard pictures by Selectman Fred C. Tobey, Jr., on behalf

of his mother, mementoes of her father, Captain George H. Colby, one of the first New Hampshire Guardsmen in 1888, and Captain of the first unit in Plymouth. Captain Colby was accidentally killed many years ago. These gifts will be preserved in the Armory.

The local defense value of this Unit was demonstrated in October of 1957 at midnight during a heavy rainstorm that suddenly swelled the rivers. The siren called the Guards to rescue the people on River street from their flooded homes. Searching for lost children and hunters and fighting forest fires are other services that the Guards have willingly performed.

*Dr. Harold E. Hyde at the closet where slaves were concealed.*

## SILVER HALL

The dilapidated N. P. Rogers' residence was removed to clear the site for a combination gymnasium and art center for the Teachers College in 1954. An auditorium, named Silver Hall, a fitting honor to Dr. Ernest L. Silver, serves for gymnasium purposes, also accommodates an audience of twelve hundred people. A stage is equipped with fixtures for lighting and scenery for dramatic performances that vary from Shakespeare and Ibsen to modern authors. On the north side are studios for the music department that presents both choral and instrumental programs.

Silver Hall is open to organizations in the town for dancing and concerts,

a compensation of value because no other auditorium has replaced the loss of Music Hall in the Kidder Block.

This structure, with a modern architectural design surrounded by the old elms and a wide lawn, adds a beauty spot along Main street as well as a center of cultural additions to the curriculum of Plymouth Teachers College.

## ASQUAMCHUMAUKE VILLAGE

As soon as the D.A.R. learned that the Armory was to be located on the bank by the Baker River, a request was sent to General McSwiney that he instruct his workmen to watch for Indian fireholes while they were excavating for the foundations. This brought interesting results.

Evidently a group of archeologists heard about this letter. They sought for permission to search about these meadows. The report of their borings stated that ashes at least 2,000 years of age were discovered.

Children have found many Indian arrow heads as they played in these fields. On the top of a crag to the west of the river, peculiar figures have been chipped into the granite. A long wooden paddle of unusual design was taken from the bank of the river on the Spencer farm. Prehistoric sites are worthy of investigation within the vicinity of Plymouth.

*Indians' landmarks on a cliff in the north section of Plymouth.*

CAPTAIN HARL PEASE, JR.

The new Air Force Base at Portsmouth was named, on September 7, 1957, Pease Air Force Base in honor of Captain Harl Pease, Jr. because he attained the highest record of any deceased aviator in New Hampshire.

Captain Pease was born on April 10, 1917 in Plymouth. After his graduation from the University of New Hampshire in 1939, he immediately enlisted in the Air Corps and received his advance training at Randolph and at Kelley Fields in Texas.

He was assigned to the 93rd Bombardment Squadron, 19th Bombardment Group, that flew the Pacific to blaze the trail for future fliers. In the Philippines at the time of Pearl Harbor, then in Australia, he was not with his Squadron when this group was stranded at Corregidor.

Planes in the Pacific were called "crippled old crates." Captain Pease with his own know-how serviced a plane and flew back and forth over the ocean until he rescued every man off Corregidor. Again, in another plane that he repaired, he joined his Squadron in the Battle over Rabaul in New Britain on August 6-7, 1942. Attacked by many Japanese planes, his plane caught fire and probably fell into the sea.

The 19th chose Captain Pease to receive the second Congressional Medal of Honor that was presented to his parents by President Franklin D. Roose-

velt, posthumously, which was the third honor bestowed upon him for his outstanding bravery in the Air Service.

At the date of the dedication of the Base, Mr. and Mrs. Harl Pease, and their daughter, Charlotte, with officials of the Town of Plymouth and hundreds of citizens were present when Selectman Fred C. Tobey, Jr. presented a portrait of Captain Pease to the Base from the citizens of the Town of Plymouth.

A detailed account about Captain Pease may be found in the Plymouth Town Report Book for 1957.

## THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE CHURCH

Christian Science was introduced into Plymouth in 1945 at evening meetings in a private home. Then a room in the Fox Block on Main street was obtained for Sunday morning services and the lending library.

The Plymouth Christian Science Society was formed on January 8, 1948 as a branch of the Mother Church in Boston. Two years later, services were held at noon in the Congregational Church and Sunday School classes were started.

With the financial assistance of the Mary Baker Eddy Trust Fund and other friends, a lot was purchased on Emerson street in 1955. A Christian Science church in Tamworth was moved here and was completed for the dedication service on August 25, 1957.

The reading room remains at the Fox Block that is well supplied with the literature of the Society including the Christian Science Monitor.

## THE NEW BANK

The Pemigewasset Bank and the Plymouth Guaranty Savings Bank sold their building of 1885 to the New Hampshire Electric Co-Op., Inc. in 1955, then moved to their modern quarters. Their new structure was ready for occupancy on the site of the former Tufts Block.

On either side of the wide lobby the two banks function in separate suites. The equipment consists of consultation rooms, offices, fire-proof vaults and safety boxes for individual patrons. In the basement are a directors' lounge, storage space and the heating plant. A drive-in window and ample parking space offer rapid service.

On the date that the doors were to swing wide to the visiting public, an exciting event was anticipated in New Hampshire. President Dwight D. Eisenhower had arranged to accept the invitation of his Administrative Assistant, Ex-Governor Sherman Adams, to visit the White Mountains and test the fishing in the lakes and streams.

*President Eisenhower dedicated this Bank on June 24, 1955.*

At the suggestion of the two senators, the President graciously consented to stop for ten minutes as he passed through Plymouth, to cut the ribbon across the doorway of the new bank.

Accompanied by Governor Lane Dwinell, Senator Styles Bridges, Senator Norris Cotton, Congressmen Chester Merrow and Perkins Bass and Mr. and Mrs. Adams, the entourage of automobiles circled the Village Green. The President stood in his car, wearing his well known smile, to wave at the welcome from hundreds of voices of the citizens that crowded the streets.

Within the bank the Directors and entire personnel were waiting at the entrance. The Directors expressed their gratification for the honor of this visit. Then the President cut the ribbon, responding to the welcome in informal, friendly words.

Thus, the date of June 24, 1955 will mark the records of the banks for an unprecendented honor in their doorway.

## AYER INSURANCE AGENCY

A review of the business houses in the town establishes the fact that Ayer Insurance Agency is the oldest company and also one that the same family has maintained. Mr. Charles J. Ayer began to write insurance policies in 1880 at Pike while he managed a store there. In 1897, Mr. Ayer came to Plymouth to devote his entire time to the insurance business. He was successful in organizing group insurance for prominent companies in his later lifetime. He died in 1927.

A son, Mr. Percy M. Ayer and now a grandson, Mr. C. James Ayer,

have succeeded the founder in carrying on the Agency with Mr. Oliver G. Cole and Mr. Merlin F. Connary as partners in 1963.

## CLAY'S NEWS STAND

Another long-time business is Clay's News Stand, the successor of a newspaper and magazine business that was located in the old railroad station.

Young Gordon M. Clay came from New Hampton after graduation from the Academy, to play baseball on a team that Dr. Ernest L. Bell was promoting about 1905. After being employed at the Draper and Maynard factory, Mr. Clay purchased the newspaper business and established Clay's News Stand that was located for years in the Fox Block.

Mr. Clay died two years ago, leaving his two sons to continue the business: Mr. Sam B. Clay and Mr. John G. Clay. The stand has been moved to the Rand Block where a larger space permits a display of the many lines that they now carry in their stock.

## THE HATCH DAIRY

Over fifty years ago, Mr. George A. Hatch began a milk route among the homes in the village. His herd of inspected cattle is housed in the barn that was the temporary meetinghouse in 1788, after the log sanctuary was destroyed by an incendiary before the new structure on Ward Hill was finished.

In time this became another father and son enterprise with son Cecil a partner in the Hatch Dairy. Pasteurizing equipment permitted the firm to take on the production of surrounding farms.

At present the Dairy carries on both a retail route and wholesale bottled milk and cream and other milk products for the grocery stores in town.

## WALLACE C. CUSHING & SON

A fourth father and son firm is the Wallace C. Cushing and Son, Painters. During the past five decades Mr. Wallace C. Cushing has painted the public buildings and scores of the homes in this area.

Now that years prevent this strenuous activity, Mr. Wallace C. Cushing, Jr. supervises this extensive business that employs numerous experienced workmen and apprentices with contracts booked far in advance of his daily schedule.

## SPRAGUE ELECTRIC COMPANY

On Route 25, a factory seemed to spring up over night with the Sprague Electric Company coming to town in 1960. This business has many different factories scattered across the nation. In Plymouth, transistors are manufactured, with many women being employed. As a gradual increase in trained workers fills the positions, this business promises growth for the population in the future.

## PERRY LAMP MANUFACTURE

The former railroad station has been purchased and equipped to manufacture modern designs in electric lamps. Mr. and Mrs. Norman W. Perry are creating designs for homes, hotels and public buildings. Their original and artistic creations attract large orders over a wide territory.

## MICRO-SONIC, INC.

On the Daniel Webster Highway at the top of Peg Mill Hill, a small factory was erected in 1957 for finishing machine tools, by Mr. Lewis L. Beauchemin. The business increased rapidly and a large addition was erected in 1962.

## OCEANSIDE MACHINE SHOP

Another business on Route 25 developed several years ago to manufacture parts for airplanes. At times this firm employs a force of twenty men.

## WATER SUPPLY

The problem of sufficient water for an increasing population presented itself about the beginning of this decade. The Water Commissioners of the Precinct decided that the driven wells on the meadow were not yielding a sufficient flow to provide fire protection. Mr. John Gadd explained this nationwide condition to the citizens.

Engineers were employed who recommended that the wells be driven deeper, a water tower be erected near the reservoirs and other renovations be approved. As a result, bonds were issued to spread the expenses over a term of years. The sum of $311,826.60 was invested in this project.

Flowing beneath the surface of our valley are underground streams into which, apparently, the drilling tapped. An unfailing supply of water is the greatest natural resource that Plymouth now possesses.

## THE POLLUTION PROBLEM

With the "birth-rate explosion" in this generation, the increasing population presents problems of health that demand change in the methods of waste disposal. The rivers have become open sewers to carry wastes to the sea.

Pollution of the streams must be eliminated, beginning at the source of these brooks and rivers. Studies by engineers have been completed along the Baker River. At present, Plymouth has solved its problem by a lagoon near Langdon Park to contain the sewage from Ward Hill. The next decade will bring the demand to free the Pemigewasset Valley from pollution and more bond issues will be the result.

FOX POND PARK

The name, Fox Pond Park, derives from the person who developed the area, Mr. Plummer Fox.

The story begins with the corner of Main and Highland streets in 1774 at the time that Captain David Webster sold this spot for a lot for the first courthouse, then moved the framework to the top of Webster street.

Some years after Benjamin Dearborn married Elizabeth, the granddaughter of Captain Webster, he came to Plymouth from Campton and built his store on this same site facing Highland street. After Benjamin died, the building was destroyed by fire and his wife re-built it.

A young man, Plummer Fox, was a clerk in the Russell store, then he married Charlotte Dearborn and became a merchant in the Dearborn store. Mr. Fox purchased the house on Russell street that is now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Harl Pease. Mrs. Pease is the daughter of Plummer Fox. Thus, by marriages of the Webster, Dearborn, Fox and Pease daughters we have the history of the corner of Highland and Main streets.

Mr. Fox wished a pasture for his own cows and those of his neighbor, so he bought the area that is now Fox Pond Park. The Hazeltine Brook ran through this pasture along a depression that Mr. Fox decided would fill for

a pond if he dammed the brook. Mr. Everett Asa Keniston stated in a town meeting that his grandfather set the granite blocks for this dam. Mrs. Pease related that when she was a small girl she watched the men as they built this dam.

About seventy years ago, families began to use ice boxes, then refrigerators. Although many built ice houses and filled them in the winter, burying the cakes of ice in sawdust that the mills were glad to give away, yet other families purchased ice during the summer. Large ice houses were erected beside Fox Pond and a thrifty business developed.

The water of the brook was pure and the ice was used by the Boston and Maine Railroad to cool the drinking water in the tanks of the passenger cars while the trains ran from Plymouth.

After electric refrigerators eliminated the demand for ice, the ice houses fell apart and children began to swim in the pond. Several years ago the town purchased thirteen acres, including the pond, for a park.

A commission was appointed to clear the pond for swimming and develop the acres for recreation. A Red Cross-licensed lifeguard is on duty during the summer months, a bath-house is to be erected soon, and fireplaces for cook outs and playgrounds are developing. The Boy Scouts are planning a camping site.

This area, within walking distance of the village, should become a park where old and young may enjoy its many advantages for all seasons of the year.

## EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

To provide educational opportunities for its youth, the citizens of Plymouth are generous. New equipment for changing curriculums is furnished annually.

Mechanized homes deny to boys and girls those tasks of yesterday that trained them to handle tools. Schools are teaching manual skills.

In 1958, a well lighted manual arts building was added to the High School plant, providing shop and domestic arts. A cafeteria serves hundreds of hot lunches that conform to recommendations by expert dietitians.

Health and physical fitness are taught by athletic programs that demanded improved sanitary facilities that were installed on the level of the gymnasium in the Guy E. Speare building in 1961.

Crowding is the vocal complaint at present. Cooperative school districts are the most recent suggestions from a state wide survey. Plymouth answers to this centralized plan with tuition pupils converging from surrounding communities to account for fifty per cent of the enrollment in the High School.

## SHOPPING TO DATE

Village streets were not intended for automobile traffic that permits customers to step from car to stores. Since to please is the rule of trade, the First National Store purchased an area on South Main street for a modern grocery and parking lot.

The old "Plymouth House" disappeared, once a tavern on the early Jabez Hatch Weld property. The garden of the Dodge home is gone and the house may be razed. Summer residents from the lakes area appreciate these marketing improvements.

In 1962, Newberry's chain store enlarged its floor space to become the second in size in New Hampshire, after a survey had proved that Plymouth will grow as a shopping center.

## BLAIR DORMITORY

Plymouth Teachers College is planning for the future. In 1962, a dormitory for men was named in honor of Senator Henry W. Blair, who pledged more than his resources to assure that the Normal School was located in Plymouth almost a century ago. A student body of 1,500 is anticipated.

## ZONING LAWS

Population is invading the rural areas. Customers for houselots ask, "Does your town have zoning laws?" The use of land has become a question of protection of property values, especially in residential zones.

The Town of Plymouth adopted an experimental zoning ordinance in 1960, which experience will modify. The State of New Hampshire has devised regulations about zoning that specify how a zoning adjustment board must conduct its decisions.

Zoning may be defined as protection, not as restriction, for the property owners.

## THE LIONS CLUB

The Lions Club was organized eleven years ago by a group of enthusiastic young professional and business men. Community betterment is their continual purpose.

The health of school pupils, specifically care for their eyesight, receives constant attention. A scholarship is awarded every year.

Their contribution toward the bath house at Fox Pond Park is generous and largely responsible for the construction at present.

The members are assuming responsibilities for the arrangements for the Bi-centennial program with immediate plans to install new metal street signs throughout the town.

## SUMMARY

The twentieth decade was a period of unusual activity: loss of passenger trains, building the gymnasium for the College, improving Route 25 with the traffic circle at the Gate Post in West Plymouth, erecting the Armory at the site of the ancient Asquamchumauke Village, the new bank building, naming the Air Force Base at Portsmouth in honor of Captain Harl Pease, the Christian Science Church, developing Fox Pond Park, and the Lions Club.

Mention was made of the four firms that are over fifty years of age: Ayer Insurance, Inc., Clay's News Stand, the Hatch Dairy and Wallace C. Cushing & Son, Painters and new industries: Sprague Electric Company, Perry Lamp Manufactory, Micro-Sonic, Inc., and Oceanside Machine Shop. There were problems for an increased water supply, to eradicate pollution, and zoning. Three recent additions: new First National Store, J. J. Newberry and Blair Hall at the College; also many modern ranch type homes indicated a growth in the town.

The Rural Electric Co-operative is enlarging the old bank building, and the New England Telephone Company has erected a central office building at the corner of Langdon and High streets, not yet fully equipped for a dial system.

At the close of this decade, Plymouth has a population of 3,100 that is increased by approximately a thousand students during the school and college year. Tourists find modern motels and inns, excellent restaurants, and all types of services for automobiles in over thirty stations.

Situated between the lakes region and the mountains, with new highways at all of the approaches, Plymouth is a busy community both summer and winter. New industries, up-to-date shopping centers, and a delightful four-season climate are features that are attracting increasing numbers of both seasonal and permanent residents.

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The author gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the above Sources.

## MAP OF PLYMOUTH

On the inside of the front cover is a map of Plymouth, dated 1905.

This map has been brought up to date, 1963, with the numbers of the State Highways and names of the surrounding towns.

The old school districts are numbered, and the cemeteries are marked by a square containing a cross.

The hills and many of the brooks bear the names of early settlers.